

HM condolences to India

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Droupadi Murmu of the Republic of India, on victims of Gujarat state's bridge collapse, west India. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sympathies to President Murmu, families of victims and the people of India. – ONA



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VERSTAPPEN CLAIMS RECORD 14TH WIN



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OMAN'S FISCAL DEFICIT TO TURN INTO SURPLUS OF 6% OF GDP IN 2022: WB REPORT



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LISU.. AN ICONIC ELEMENT OF THE OMANI TRADITIONAL DRESS



MUSCAT

HM CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT OF CHINA

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Xi Jinping of the People's Republic of China on his re-election as General Secretary of the ruling Communist Party of China for a third term. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of success to President Jinping. His Majesty also wished the people of China further progress and prosperity and the cooperation relations between the two countries further development and growth. — ONA

HM GREET'S ALGERIA, ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Abdelmadjid Tebboune of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on his country's National Day. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health, well-being and long life to President Tebboune. His Majesty has also sent a cable of greetings to Dr Rodney Errey Lawrence, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda, on his country's Independence Anniversary. — ONA

RGO TO MARK ANNUAL DAY TODAY

The Royal Guard of Oman (RGO) will mark its annual day celebrated on November 1 every year under the auspices of HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, today. The RGO has witnessed a qualitative leap in the military, administrative, technological and technical aspects thanks to the great attention accorded to it by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander. — ONA

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Architecture has potential to improve the quality of life



AGA KHAN AWARDS FOR MUSIC AND ARCHITECTURE CONCLUDES

ZAINAB AL NASSRI

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His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham bin Tarik al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, presided over the 15th edition of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture. Six recipients were honoured with the award for their architectural works promising solutions, and likely drivers of change in the future.

The concluding ceremony was held at the Royal Opera House Muscat in the presence of ministers, under-secretaries, members of the diplomatic corps and other dignitaries.

Aga Khan Music Programme artists presented a musical interlude with the participation of Yurdal Tukan, international

Architecture is a collective enterprise that entails creativity, innovation, vision, and input from a host of players – from architects and clients – to fabricators, masons, and craftspeople

FARROKH DERAKHSHANI

Director of the award

musician and composer.

The jury announced the six winning projects for the current edition. The winning

projects include Urban River Spaces and Community Spaces in Rohingya Refugee Response; Cox's Bazar from Bangladesh's Banyuwangi International airport; Blimbingsari, East Java from Indonesia; Argo Contemporary Art Museum and Cultural Centre, Tehran, Iran; Renovation of Niemeyer Guest House, Tripoli, Lebanon; and Kamanar Secondary School, Thionck Essyl, Senegal.

Farrokh Derakhshani, Director of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, said: "Since the first award ceremony in 1980, we have celebrated the winners of each triennial cycle all over the world, in places where Muslims are present and where they have enriched cultural heritage."

TURN TO P2

SAYYID ASAAD ARRIVES IN ALGIERS



Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Asaad bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, arrived in Algiers on Monday to chair the Sultanate of Oman's delegation at the 31st Arab Summit, due to be held in the Algerian capital, Algiers on Tuesday and Wednesday. HH Sayyid Asaad and his accompanying delegation were received at Houari Boumediene Airport by Ayman Abdel Rahman, Prime Minister of Algeria. DETAILS ON P2

Bolsonaro yet to concede after Lula's election win

SAO PAULO: Brazil's outgoing President Jair Bolsonaro had on Monday yet to concede defeat in the presidential election, raising fears the far-right nationalist might contest the victory of his leftist rival, former president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Tens of thousands of jubilant supporters took to the streets of Sao Paulo on Sunday night to celebrate a stunning comeback for Lula, a 77-year-old former metalworker who served two terms as president from 2003 to 2010. His electoral win follows a spell in prison for corruption convictions that were later annulled.

Bolsonaro left his residence on Monday morning and headed to the presidential palace, but had still not made any public comments. He is the first



Brazilian incumbent to lose a presidential election. Lula has vowed to overturn his legacy, including pro-gun policies and weak protection of the Amazon rainforest. Latin America leaders congratulated Lula after he won a third term as president of the largest country in South America, consolidating the region's "pink tide" of elected leftist leaders.

SEE ALSO P7

Follow precautions to avoid seasonal influenza

KABEER YOUSUF

[@kabeeryousef](#)

The Ministry of Health (MoH) has given a general call to remain vigilant against the relatively harmless seasonal influenza, which is spreading fast. Change in the weather is complementing the flu, it said. Need not panic after having flu symptoms like cough, sneezing and fever. It said the best is to take care of oneself and not become a

carrier to another person.

Speaking to the Observer, Dr Saif al Abri, Director General of Disease Control and Surveillance at the MoH, said no new mutant of Covid-19 has been reported yet.

"We don't have any of the new mutant or variant of the erstwhile Covid-19 yet while the Omicron cases are still around. We do the genetic sequencing of the virus, and we haven't found the variant here," Dr Al Abri added.

He asked for the same precautions to protect against the flu. Wearing a mask, staying away from others, taking rest at home, avoiding close contact with others, maintaining hand hygiene, and following cough and sneeze etiquette are important.

Regarding the influenza vaccine, he said people who are at risk or have comorbidities and aged 60 and above should complete their Covid-19 vaccine doses if they

haven't taken them yet. Influenza vaccine should also be taken while other age groups will be asked to take the vaccine from time to time.

"Other age groups than senior people will be asked to take influenza vaccine as and when the country has enough stocks of the same." However, they can get vaccinated at private clinics and hospitals, according to the MoH.

"Vaccine against influenza is available in the private sector, and those who have comorbidities such as chronic diseases should take the vaccine at the earliest. Also, anyone interested in taking the vaccine can take it from any private hospital or clinic," the DG added.

"We will have to take vaccine for every seasonal influenza as and when it's prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), and vaccines are available and are recommended worldwide."



Sayyid Asaad arrives in Algiers for Arab Summit

ALGIERS: Delegated by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, HH Sayyid Asaad bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan, arrived here on Monday to chair the Sultanate of Oman's delegation in the 31st Arab Summit, due to be held in the Algerian capital, Algiers on November 1 & 2.

HH Sayyid Asaad and his delegation were received at Houari Boumediene Airport by Ayman Abdel Rahman, Prime Minister of Algeria.

They were also received by Ahmed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of the Arab League, Saif bin Nasir al Badai, Ambassador

of Oman to Algeria, and a number of Algerian officials.

HH Sayyid Asaad is accompanied by an official delegation comprising Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, Dr Abdullah bin Mohammed al Saeedi, Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs, Dr Said bin Mohammed al Saqri, Minister of Economy, Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali al Harthy, Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs, Abdullah bin Nassir al Rahbi, Ambassador of Oman to Egypt and Permanent Representative to the Arab League, Saif bin Nasir al Badai, Ambassador of Oman to Algeria, and the two advisers at the Office of HH Sayyid Asaad.

Architecture has immense potential

FROM PAGE 1

"These include the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, the Alhambra in Granada, Registan Square in Samarkand, as well as important sites in Pakistan, Morocco, Syria, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar, Portugal, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and now in Oman".

He elaborated, "In this beautiful Opera House, which architect won an Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1983 for a project in Malaysia, we bring to the world's attention six exemplary projects that showcase the power of architecture to bring people together, to inspire communities, to make physical the aspirations of societies, and to improve the quality of life."

Farrokh Derakhshani asserted that architecture is a collective enterprise that entails creativity, innovation, vision, and input from a host of players - from architects and clients - to fabricators, masons, and craftspeople. "We see in the six projects we celebrate this evening a spirit of inclusivity and pluralism that is the essence of the award in its ongoing mission to recognise excellence in architecture."

CULTURAL STRATEGY

Speaking on the occasion, Sayyid Said bin Sultan al Busaidy, Under-Secretary of the



Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture, said: "The Sultanate of Oman's hosting of the ceremony of Aga Khan Awards for Architecture and Music comes in support of the objectives of the cultural strategy, which calls for an identity open to the cultures of peoples. It is an affirmation of its continuous support for culture, literature and arts and to achieve one of its most important pillars, which is promoting cultural communication and highlighting the role of Oman in building the global cultural scene."

"Besides, this comes to confirm partnership and integration with local and international institutions in the cultural fields. This hosting fully confirms the extent of Oman's ability and capabilities to host such global events and achieve the cultural vision that the Sultanate of Oman is a cultural destination with a solid identity."

He added that Oman has enjoyed a distinguished hosting of two Aga Khan ceremonies for architecture and music in one country for the first time in the awards history. This coincides with the Aga Khan's

celebration of its 45th year of the Architecture Award since its establishment in 1977, which works to encourage the concepts of architectural structures that successfully meet the needs and aspirations of societies in the fields of contemporary design, housing and community development. This, in its overall concept, enhances human values.

Expressing her gratitude for the host country, Princess Zahra Aga Khan said: "Oman is a country that is proud of its rich, traditional methods of building and living while also embracing new technologies and techniques. Celebrating the award here in Oman reflects a deep and shared conviction that buildings can do more than simply house people and programmes, they can also reflect our deepest values."

She indicated, "Tonight, the projects and the people we honour show how architecture that is truly global can also be deeply local; how it can bring the best talents and ideas from around the world to create buildings and spaces that achieve enduring excellence by being of their time and of their place. They show us how architecture can create a dialogue among people, build bridges between communities, and act as places of sanctuary for those in need."

Invitation for Expression of Interest For Solar PV Project



Renaissance Services SAOG (Renaissance) is a leading facilities management and service solutions company, listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange. Renaissance specialises in Integrated Facilities Management (IFM); Soft FM; Hard FM; and Accommodation Solutions.

The tender packages are:

- New Plant - Renaissance Village Duqm (min. 1 MW capacity)
- New Plant - Renaissance Villages (PAC) Bahja, Marmul, Nimr, Qarn Alam
- Restoration - Renaissance Village Fahud (1.2 MW capacity)
- New Plant - Central Stores Ma'abala

Interested, reputable, specialised, and experienced Companies having a minimum of 5 years' experience in the field of similar works are requested to submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) in participating in the above Tender.

Renaissance owns and operates integrated workforce accommodation solutions within the Special Economic Zone in Duqm and PDO concession area across the Sultanate.

Renaissance is in the process of receiving proposals to Design, Build, Own, Operate and Transfer (DBOOT) solar PV

installations at its facilities across the Sultanate to meet the internal daytime requirements of the respective sites. The contract will be on Opex basis with appropriate performance guarantee terms and buy-out options during the contract period.

The EOI shall consist of the following:

- Company profile
- Commercial registration of the company
- Projects carried out in the last 5 years, including on Opex basis
- QHSE certifications and HSE records for last 5 years

Submission form available on www.renaissanceservices.com
Please submit your EOI on or before **November 7, 2022** to solarproject@renaissanceservices.com

All communications should be addressed to:
The Chief Commercial Officer
Renaissance Services SAOG
P.O. Box 1676, P.C. 114, Muttrah, Sultanate of Oman





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■ OMAN, KUWAIT REVIEW BILATERAL RELATIONS



MUSCAT: HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, received in his office at Muaskar Al Murtafaa on Monday Dr Mohammed Nasser al Hajri, Ambassador of the State of Kuwait to the Sultanate of Oman. The two sides reviewed the bilateral relations between Oman and Kuwait. -- ONA

MoTCIT moves to new premises

VINOD NAIR
@vinot_nair

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MoTCIT) has moved its operations to a new integrated building in the ministries district of Al Khuwair for the first time in 30 years.

At the completion of the refurbishment, the new building, which was earlier home to the now-defunct Ministry of Civil Service, will have a multi-story car park that can accommodate

750 vehicles and four buildings for visitor and documentation services.

Speaking to the Observer, Eng Khamis bin Mohammed al Shamakhi, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology for Transport, said that the new building will save the ministry nearly RO 500 million that was paid as rent earlier to house its various directorates.

"We are working on some strategic projects that will be signed before the end of this

year. There are several projects coming up in Dhofar, Batinah, and Musandam," he said.

The decision to move to the new building is to bring all staff together from different locations, improve efficiency and the speed of the work through better communication among employees.

It was revealed during a media interaction that the five-year digital transformation programme's progressing at a rate of 26.4 per cent and is expected to reach 100 per cent by the end of 2025.

Humanising cities at the core of urban planning

KABEER YOUSUF
@kabeeryousef

Humanising the cities and their various social and health dimensions, raising awareness of climate changes and their impact on planning, exchange of global experiences and expertise are in focus at the two-day October Urban Planning Forum 2022, organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning from Monday at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC).

The forum aims to enhance the economic dimension of future cities, consider urban sustainability that serves the goals of Oman Vision 2040, review the experiences of regional development projects, and enable environmental sustainability is rich with the participation of experts in urban planning, CEOs of related projects, as well as engineering consulting firms, and school and college students.

As many as 1,500 people are expected to visit the forum. Its accompanying events will continue for two days.

"The forum is the result of believing in the importance of the urban strategy in raising societal awareness of the nature and objectives of urban planning and

in order to enhance the concept of prosperous communities," said the Public Relations representatives from the ministry.

The forum includes four themes, with more than ten speakers presenting over 14 research papers in the areas of sustainable quality of life for prosperous communities, urban planning and risk management, regional development projects, in addition to planning and the spatial nature.

The theme of sustainable quality of life for prosperous societies includes three papers on city humanisation, cities for all, and green infrastructure.

The theme of urban planning and risk management, in turn, includes three papers on planning flexibility to adapt to climate change, city planning, mental health and the impact of the pandemic on life in the cities, and the importance of planning in economic prosperity and cities to keep pace with economic trends.

The theme of regional development projects discusses the sustainable city projects in Yiti, Al-Ula in Saudi Arabia, and Dubai Expo 2020, while the theme of planning and spatial nature reviews planning areas of special nature, parks, wadis, planning and

seasonal climate, and Geo-Oman.

The forum also involves a number of accompanying events, the most important of which is the signing of a trilateral cooperation programme between MoHUP, the Environment Authority (EA) and Muscat Municipality on tree planting in residential neighbourhoods in Muscat Governorate, which comes as part of the Authority to plant 1 million trees.

There will also be the Urban Planning Hackathon, which targets undergraduate students of last year as well as recently graduated students of architecture and design majors in order to empower them and enhance their energies and ideas to serve the process of construction and urban planning besides urban planning debates targeting school students.

The MoHUP aims to raise awareness of the importance of urban planning, contribute to the aspirations of the community in the future lifestyle, empower the youth and involve them in the urban planning sector, enable the National Urban Development Strategy, as well as involve institutions in the urban planning process and to achieve institutional integration towards future cities.

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KHIMJI RAMDAS

SUPPORTERS

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DIWAN OF ROYAL COURT

Tender Notice (4)

Diwan of Royal Court sultanate of Oman, Muscat, announces the following tender for Replacement of Interactive Boards in Islamic Institutes:

Tender No.	Tender Name:	Tender Document Value	Last Date of Purchasing Tenders	Last date of Submitting Tenders
20/2022	Replacement of Interactive Boards in Islamic Institutes	25	22/11/2022	28/11/2022

- Qualified Companies with previous experience in similar works can obtain the Tender Documents from the Directorate General of Administrative , Financial Affairs and Human Resources (Treasury Department), Diwan of Royal Court, AlKhuwair, ground Floor, from 7:30 am till 12:00 pm right from the date of post by paying the document value.
- Each company's tender should be accompanied by a Tender Bond in the form of bank guarantee or certified cheque issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for an amount of (1%) of the Tender Value valid for (90) days from the date of submission. Any Bid not accompanied with the full Tender Bond will be excluded.
- The Tender Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the offers.
- Bids must be submitted in an envelope sealed with red wax addressed to His Excellency, the Chairman of the Tender Committee. The Tender name and number should be written on the envelope. Nothing should be written on the envelope to display the identity of the bidder or what refers to him.
- The bids should be deposited in the Tender Box, Seventh floor, Diwan of Royal Court (Purchases Department), Ghala and no bids will be accepted after 12:00pm.
- No Bids will be accepted after the last date of submission shown in the above table.
- The Tender Committee will award the tender to the company that has the largest percentage of Omanisation and possible purchases of national products.

Diwan of Royal Court is not obliged to award the tender to the lowest or any other offer.

For any further clarification and assistance, you may contact the following numbers:
24026308 - 24026307 - 24742988 - 99360386 - 99505069



■ OMAN, BRITAIN MILITARY EXERCISE BEGINS



HAIMA: The joint Omani-British military exercise Khanjar Oman 2022 kicked off at the military training zone in Al Wusta Governorate on Monday. The drill, carried out by the Western Border Security Force at the Royal Army of Oman (RAO) and the 4th Infantry Brigade of the British army, will conclude on November 10. – **ONA**

■ UK AMBASSADOR BIDS FAREWELL



MUSCAT: Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, received on Monday Bill Murray, Ambassador of the United Kingdom (UK) to the Sultanate of Oman, to bid him farewell at the end of his tour of duty. The UK ambassador expressed his appreciation for the cooperation extended to him by all officials in the Sultanate of Oman. He also lauded the bilateral relations between Oman and the UK. On his turn, Gen Al Numani thanked the ambassador for the efforts he exerted in boosting relations between the two countries during his tour of duty, wishing him success in his future endeavours. – **ONA**

Oman Tree Day

TREE PLANTATION, AWARENESS PROGRAMMES MARK CELEBRATION



AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, OCT. 31

Several trees were planted, and awareness programmes were launched to mark Omani Tree Day, which falls on October 31.

Tree Day comes as a reminder to ensure afforestation, fight desertification, reduce land degradation, and preserve wild plants through the multiplication and expansion of green spaces.

Schools celebrated the day through awareness programmes and involving students in tree plantations.

The cultivated area in the Sultanate of Oman witnessed an increase in 2021 over 2020. The tree is a symbol of giving, growth and goodness. The country has 277,000 feddans of cultivated land, according to the National Centre for Statistics and Information. Agricultural crops rank highest with 111,000 feddans of perennial fodder crops followed by 80,000 fruits and 66,000 vegetables.

Omani Tree Day calls for reforestation in the Sultanate of Oman for environmental, economic and cultural growth and protection of wild plants, which are a great source of food and pharmaceutical industries. They also support the lives of many living creatures and maintain the balance of the ecosystems.

By developing gardens and parks, the Muscat Municipality keeps in mind the factors like afforestation and saving the land from degradation. The

Omani Tree Day calls for reforestation in the Sultanate of Oman for environmental, economic and cultural growth and protection of wild plants, which are a great source of food and pharmaceutical industries. They also support the lives of many living creatures and maintain the balance of the ecosystems



projects take care of several factors, including projects that are sustainable; reduce water consumption and reduce future maintenance burdens. The projects ensure that the selected plants are compatible with the environment in the Governorate of Muscat.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed an agreement with the Environment Authority to raise awareness about the global trends of sustainability, improving the urban landscape in the cities, enhancing the interaction with the city residents, reducing the intensity of cement blocks in cities, and increasing the per capita share of green spaces.

The Environment Department in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate implemented the third phase of a project to make an inventory and document perennial wild trees in Nizwa's green mountains. In cooperation with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) it also planted wild seedlings in the Nizwa Industrial Area.

On Tree Day, members of the 'Green Adam' organised a campaign to plant 800 seedlings in the health corridor in the Wilayat on Adam-Sinaw Road and Al Fulaj area under the 'Plant a tree today' slogan. The campaign was organised in cooperation with parents and charitable teams.

The 'Space Team' organised a camp to plant 56 seedlings of agricultural plants in the Fulaj area behind the Bani Shayban council, where the team planted seedlings, built a brick fence, installed a tank and made water connections for each tree.

Naim bin Ibrahim al Shaibani, the project supervisor, said: "We planted trees in an orderly manner and in uniform sizes so that they provide an aesthetic view and shade to citizens. The trees selected are heritage trees such as Sidr, Ghaf, Shua, Sherish, Hambu, and palm of Mariam, which withstand extreme heat and climatic conditions in the state."



HM thanked by Indonesia President

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from President Joko Widodo of the Republic of Indonesia in reply to His Majesty's greetings cable on his country's Independence Anniversary. In his cable, President Widodo expressed his sincere appreciation

for His Majesty the Sultan's heartfelt sentiments. He also affirmed his keenness to bolster the bilateral relations between the two countries. President Widodo also wished His Majesty good health and well-being and the Omani people further progress and prosperity. — ONA

Oman expresses sympathy to India over victims of bridge collapse



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has expressed sympathy with the Republic of India over the collapse of a bridge in the state of Gujarat, according to a statement issued by the Foreign

Ministry here on Monday. Oman has also extended its sincere condolences to the Indian government, people and families of the victims, wishing the injured a speedy recovery. — ONA

High-level antimicrobial conference to be held in Muscat on Nov 24-25

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
@LAKSHMIOMAN

The Sultanate of Oman will host the Third Global High-level Ministerial Conference on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in Muscat from November 24 to 25, 2022.

Minister of Health, Dr Hilal al Sabti, said that AMR is still a concern for the ministry even though the situation is stable.

"We have to be cautious and advocate for the resistance against antibiotics that are available in the market, which are approved internationally and nationally.

We have to be meticulous, and the earlier we tackle it, the better. It is important to monitor the situation to avoid the negative impact," the minister said while addressing a press conference.

"The conference will pave the way to bold and specific political commitments in the 2024 UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on AMR," said some officials.

The AMR Conference aims to accelerate tackling antimicrobial resistance at the national, regional, and global levels, as well as to promote international cooperation.

The third conference builds on the success of the two previous Ministerial Conferences held



in the Netherlands in 2014 and 2019. The 3rd AMR Conference will gather ministers of health, agriculture, animal health, and environment along with the Quadripartite Alliance (WHO, FAO, OIE, UNEP), policymakers, key global experts, representatives from the private sectors, civil society and related research institutions and international organisations.

The conference will be conducted through keynote speeches, case studies to demonstrate best practices, and interactive discussions between participants. The conference will be an opportunity for an interactive dialogue on One Health's Action to address the AMR pandemic. Therefore, the theme of the conference this year is "The AMR Pandemic: from

Policy to One Health Action". The Director General at the Ministry of Health, Dr Saif al Abri, said to Oman Observer that Covid-19 taught a lot.

"Many people across the globe have died because of Antimicrobial resistance. The experience has taught us the importance of inter-sectoral collaboration between all the stakeholders, especially in human and animal health and the importance of rational use of antimicrobes," said Dr Saif.

He pointed out that it needs local, regional and global interventions between countries and different organisations.

Dr Saif explained, "The work has to be within the countries, starting from the community up to the top - the decision makers. We have started a collaboration as a 'One Health' approach for

Antimicrobial resistance where we are looking at humans, animals and the environment. It needs the collaboration of all sectors, and media is one of the most important sectors that have to play a role as an advocate for the AMR challenge within the country," noted Dr Saif.

Conducting the conference in the Sultanate of Oman will gather other regions beyond the European continent. It will also exchange experiences and benefit from the actions taken in those countries, which immensely helped to reduce the spread of antibiotic-resistant microbes and their adverse effects on the health and economy.

The conference is organised by the government of the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in cooperation with the Quadripartite Alliance formed by the United Nations to monitor the antibiotic resistance - World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) - and Gulf Health Council for the Cooperation Council states.

Oman, Korea boost naval cooperation



MUSCAT: Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), received in his office at Muaskar Al Murtafaa on Monday a military delegation from the Republic of Korea

The two sides reviewed means of enhancing naval cooperation between both sides. They also exchanged views on various naval matters of mutual interest.

The meeting was attended by Commodore Jasim bin Mohammed al Balushi, Director of Operations and Plans at the RNO Command.

Later, the Korean delegation visited the Maritime Security Centre (MSC).

During the visit, the guests were accompanied by Commodore Jasim bin Mohammed al Balushi, Director of Operations and Plans

at the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) Command.

Members of the visiting delegation were briefed on the roles and tasks carried out by the centre in maintaining the safety of the maritime environment. They also toured the centre's facilities and viewed its latest equipment and technologies that are used in carrying out its national duties.

— ONA

8,734 applications for trademarks, patents received in nine months

MUSCAT: Over the first 9 months of this year (2022), the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion received 8,734 applications for national and international trademarks and patents.

The applications included 8,044 ones for national and international trademarks, 505 applications for patents, 87 applications for intellectual items claimed as copyrights, 13 applications for industrial design and 85 applications for usufruct licence. — ONA



Rules simplified, but GCC Residents need visa to enter Oman

MUSCAT: The Royal Oman Police's Directorate General of Passports and Residence has simplified the process of travel for GCC residents who wish to come to the Sultanate of Oman.

As per the recently issued decision, regardless of job categories, all GCC residents can obtain visas (either E-Visa or Visa on arrival depending on the nationalities) to enter the Sultanate of Oman via different ports.

In a statement to the Observer, an ROP spokesman clarified that GCC residents still need visas to enter the Sultanate of Oman, unlike some reports on social media.

Previously, GCC residents with certain professions and job categories were excluded from



entering the Sultanate of Oman without any local sponsorship.

Article 1 of the decision states that all residents of the countries of the GCC have the right to enter Oman for all commercial professions, while Article 2 states

that it is not required to come from the country of residency for example -- a resident of any GCC country is not required to arrive directly from that GCC country to benefit from this facility.

Earlier, it was necessary for the

residents to come directly from a GCC country.

Article 3 states that a residence visa must be valid in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council for a period of no less than three months.

Article 4 states that the procedures referred to above shall be applied, bearing in mind the importance of adhering to the policy of granting visas to prohibited nationalities.

A statement from Saud bin Nasser al Hubaishi, vice-president, Muscat International Airport, stressed to airlines and ground handling companies the need to direct all specialists to provide the necessary facilities for those coming to the Sultanate of Oman as mentioned.

VISA-FREE

As part of efforts to promote and ease services for tourists visiting Oman, nationals of 103 countries are exempted from entry visas for stays of up to 14 days.

The exemption will be subject

to certain requirements including a prior and confirmed hotel booking, health insurance, and a return ticket.

However, citizens from 27 out of 103 countries are exempted from visas for 14 days to enter Oman only if they have a Schengen visa in their passports or have entry visas to the USA, Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, or Japan.

The 27 countries are India, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Uzbekistan, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Costa Rica, Kyrgyzstan, Nicaragua, Armenia, Panama, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkmenistan, Honduras, Guatemala, Kazakhstan, Laos, Albania, Bhutan, Peru, Salvador, Mexico, Vietnam, Cuba, and Maldives.



South Korea mourns Halloween crowd crush victims

Task force to investigate exact cause of fatal crush

SEOUL: South Koreans gathered on Monday at memorials honouring the 154 people killed in a crush at Halloween celebrations, as authorities faced accusations that lax crowd control had caused the disaster.

Police said on Monday they had set up a task force to investigate the exact cause of the fatal crush, seizing CCTV from businesses close to the scene in Seoul's popular Itaewon district, deploying forensic officers, and interviewing dozens of witnesses.

But at an official altar set up in central Seoul to mourn the young victims, South Koreans wept, prayed, and railed against authorities' failures to prevent the catastrophic loss of young life.

"I am devastated by what happened, they were just trying to have a good time," 19-year-old student Hwang Gyu-Hyeon said, weeping and struggling to speak clearly, as she explained how the deaths of so many people her own age had affected her.

"I pray for the victims. I can't believe this accident happened despite the signs that were clear beforehand. Nothing was done to prepare for this crowd," she said.

Song Jung-hee, 69, said she kept thinking about how "excited and spirited" the young victims must have been, eager to enjoy a night out without Covid restrictions for the first time in three years.

"If only there had been more police officers to keep order, this would not have happened," she said.

On Monday, families of the victims began holding funerals at



A woman hugs her friend near a joint memorial altar for victims of the deadly Halloween crowd surge, in Naksopyeong, near the district of Itaewon in Seoul on Monday. — AFP

hospitals across the capital. South Korean hospitals typically have facilities on-site for last rites to be performed.

At the Soonchunhyang hospital, the family of one victim wept and wailed during the traditional ceremony, with one relative crying "you poor baby" over and over as she walked up to the altar. Calls for accountability grew in the press and online on Monday, as potential lapses of crowd control and policing emerged. As many as 100,000 people — mostly in their teens and 20s, many wearing Halloween costumes — had poured into Itaewon's small, winding streets, with eyewitnesses

describing scant security and no crowd control.

Police said at a briefing on Monday they had deployed 137 officers to the event, pointing out that the number was significantly higher than previous years.

But local reports said many of the police officers were focused on drug use, rather than crowd control. And the authorities themselves admitted they had not foreseen that "large-scale casualties would occur due to the gathering of many people", Hong Ki-Hyun, chief of the National Police Agency's Public Order Management Bureau, told the Yonhap news agency.

"I was told that police officers on the scene didn't detect a sudden surge in the crowd," Hong said.

The disaster clearly "could have been controlled or prevented", Lee Young-Ju, a professor from the Department of Fire and Disaster at the University of Seoul, told broadcaster YTN.

"But this was not taken care of, with no one taking the responsibility in the first place."

Online, claims also spread that police did not actively manage the crowd, which allowed too many partygoers to congregate around the subway station and in the alleyway at the epicentre of the disaster. — AFP

Ethiopia says peace talks under way in South Africa

ADDIS ABABA: Talks between the Ethiopian government and the rebel authorities in Tigray aimed at finding a peaceful resolution to their devastating two-year conflict were continuing on Monday, a diplomat said.

The negotiations led by the African Union began last Tuesday in South Africa, the first formal dialogue to try to end a war that has killed many thousands of people and unleashed a desperate humanitarian crisis in northern Ethiopia.

South Africa had initially said the talks being held in Pretoria would run until Sunday, but they remain shrouded in secrecy. Ebba Kalondo, spokeswoman for AU Commission chair Moussa Faki Mahamat, said in a message to AFP that "there was no date limitation put on the talks". A diplomat with knowledge of the discussions confirmed that the talks were continuing on Monday, without giving further details, adding: "They are very strict about confidentiality."

A source close to the Tigrayan delegation in South Africa had said at the weekend that the talks would likely continue until Tuesday.

Since the negotiations began, intense fighting has continued unabated in Tigray, where government troops backed by the Eritrean army and regional forces have been waging artillery bombardments and air strikes,

capturing a string of towns from the rebels.

Diplomatic efforts to try to bring the government and the rebels to the negotiating table gathered pace after combat resumed in late August, torpedoing a five-month truce that had allowed limited amounts of aid into Tigray.

The international community has voiced deep alarm over the ongoing fighting and the human cost it has exacted on civilians caught in the crossfire.

It is calling for an immediate cessation of hostilities, humanitarian access to Tigray where many face hunger, and a withdrawal of Eritrean forces, whose return to the conflict has raised fears of renewed atrocities against civilians. The conflict erupted on November 4, 2020, when Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent troops into Tigray after accusing the region's ruling Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) of attacking federal army camps.

The fighting in Africa's second most populous country has forced more than two million people from their homes, and according to US estimates, killed as many as half a million.

However, Tigray remains largely closed off to the outside world with no communications and a shortage of food, fuel and medicines, while access to northern Ethiopia is restricted for journalists. — AFP

India bridge collapse toll jumps to 134, police detain 9 people



Rescue personnel conduct search operations after a bridge across the river Machchhu collapsed at Morbi in Gujarat on Monday. — AFP

MORBI: The death toll from a foot bridge collapse in India rose to 134 on Monday, including many children, as police detained nine people as part of a criminal investigation into one of the deadliest accidents in the country in the past decade.

CCTV footage from just before the collapse showed a group of young men taking photos while others tried to rock the suspension bridge from side to side, before they tumbled into the river below as the cables holding it together gave way.

Police in the western state of Gujarat, where the disaster occurred, said they had detained nine people after registering a criminal case against unnamed

people responsible for the renovation, maintenance and management of the bridge. Senior police official Ashok Yadav said details of those detained people would be given later in the day.

Ashwin Mehra, who was undergoing treatment after sustaining leg and back injuries when he plunged from the bridge, said he and six others had reached the shore by holding onto the bridge's metal railings and netting.

"Some 15-20 mischievous young kids were shaking the ropes of the bridge. Three times a noise came from the bridge before it collapsed," he told Reuters TV partner ANI.

Local officials said the manager of the bridge, a company making

clocks and electrical items, had not informed the authorities that the bridge would be reopened last week after repairs, adding that no certificate that it was fit for public use had been issued.

The colonial-era footbridge over the Machchhu River in the centre of Morbi town was packed with sightseers enjoying holiday festivities when it collapsed on Sunday evening, plunging people about 10 metres into the river.

Some 400 people had bought tickets to get onto the bridge to celebrate the Diwali and Chhath Puja festivals. About 35 victims were under 14, according to a list of the deceased seen by Reuters. About 170 people had been rescued by the morning. — Reuters

SHORT TAKES

JAKARTA

Indonesia revokes firms' fever syrup licences

Indonesia's food and drug agency (BPOM) said on Monday it had revoked licenses of syrup-type drug production of two local firms for violating manufacturing rules, as it probes the deaths of more than 150 children due to acute kidney injury (AKI). The decision comes after Indonesia temporarily banned sales of some syrup-based medications and identified the presence in some products of ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol as possible factors in the AKI deaths, most of which were of children under five.



The two are used in antifreeze and brake fluids and other industrial applications but also as a cheaper alternative in some pharmaceutical products to glycerine, a solvent or thickening agent in many cough syrups.

DAR ES SALAAM

Another fire breaks out on Mount Kilimanjaro

Another fire has broken out on Mount Kilimanjaro in northern Tanzania, the highest mountain in Africa. The fire started on Sunday on the north-eastern flank of the mountain, Charles Ngendo, a spokesperson for the Tanzanian National Park Authority, said on Monday. The cause of the fire remains unknown.

A week ago, a fire had broken out on the mountain at an altitude of around 3,900 metres.

According to the authorities, the first fire has yet to be extin-



guished. "The biggest problem is the strong winds blowing from different directions, making it impossible to contain the fire," Ngendo said.

MANILA

Philippines storm death toll hits 101

Philippine rescuers on Monday waded through thigh-deep mud using long pieces of wood to search for bodies buried by a landslide, as the death toll from a powerful storm rose to 101.

Just over half of the fatalities were from a series of flash floods and landslides unleashed by Tropical Storm Nalgae, which destroyed villages on the southern island of Mindanao on Friday.

Mindanao is rarely hit by the 20 or so typhoons that strike the



Philippines each year, but storms that do reach the region tend to be deadlier than in Luzon and central parts of the country.



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In brief

■ LONDON



SUNAK'S DECISION ON COP27 UNDER REVIEW

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's decision not to attend the COP27 climate summit is being kept under review and will depend on progress being made on preparation for a budget statement due on November 17, his spokesman said on Monday.

Last week Sunak said he was focusing on pressing domestic matters, and his office said he was not expected to travel to the event in Egypt.

"The prime minister is focused on pressing domestic issues, most significantly preparing for the autumn statement, so any attendance at COP would depend on progress on preparation for that fiscal event," the spokesman said.

■ LONDON



CLIMATE ACTIVISTS SPRAY-PAINT BUILDINGS ORANGE

London police on Monday arrested six people after environmental campaigners doused four landmark buildings in the British capital with orange paint in a Halloween protest.

Four were held after paint was sprayed on the interior ministry, the headquarters of the domestic intelligence agency MI5 and a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's US media conglomerate News Corp, the Metropolitan Police said. Officers arrested two others following a similar protest at the Bank of England in the capital's financial district. The Just Stop Oil group said it was responsible and posted video on its Twitter account.

■ BEIJING



COVID OUTBREAK TRAPS VISITORS AT DISNEYLAND

Shanghai Disney Resort abruptly shut its doors on Monday as Chinese authorities imposed a snap lockdown, trapping guests who are not permitted to leave until they test negative for Covid-19.

China is the last major economy wedded to a zero-Covid policy, with authorities brandishing snap lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines in an effort to stamp out emerging outbreaks. But new variants have tested local officials' ability to snuff out flare-ups faster than they can spread, causing much of the country to live under an ever-changing mosaic of curbs.

Lula wins Brazil election in political resurrection for leftist forces

SAO PAULO/BRASILIA:

Brazilian leftist leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva narrowly defeated President Jair Bolsonaro in a runoff election, but the far right incumbent had not conceded defeat by Monday morning, raising concerns he might contest the result.

Tens of thousands of jubilant supporters took to the streets of Sao Paulo to celebrate a stunning comeback for the 77-year-old former metalworker who, following his previous two-term 2003-2010 presidency, served prison time for corruption convictions that were later annulled.

Bolsonaro is the first Brazilian incumbent to lose a presidential election and Lula has vowed to overturn his legacy, including pro-gun policies and weak protection of the Amazon rainforest.

Pitching the contest as a battle for democracy after his rival made baseless claims the electoral system was open to fraud, Lula called the election a sign Brazilians "want more and not less democracy," in a victory speech that celebrated what he called his "resurrection." He promised to unite a deeply



Brazilian president-elect for the leftist Workers Party (PT) Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva greets supporters at the Paulista avenue after winning the presidential run-off election, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on Monday. — AFP

divided country. "I will govern for 215 million Brazilians, and not just for those who voted for me," Lula said at his campaign headquarters. "There are not two Brazils. We are one country, one people, one great nation."

The Supreme Electoral Court

(TSE) declared Lula won 50.9 per cent of votes, against 49.1 per cent for Bolsonaro. Lula's inauguration is scheduled for January 1.

The result in Latin America's largest nation means the left will govern all the region's major economies after a string of

electoral successes from Mexico to Argentina in recent years. A source in the Bolsonaro campaign said the president would not make public remarks until Monday. The Bolsonaro campaign did not respond to a request for comment.

"So far, Bolsonaro has not called

Bolsonaro is the first incumbent to lose a presidential election and Lula has vowed to overturn his legacy, including pro-gun policies and others

me to recognise my victory, and I don't know if he will call or if he will recognise my victory," Lula told supporters on Sao Paulo's Paulista Avenue.

In contrast to Bolsonaro's silence, congratulations for Lula poured in from foreign leaders, including US President Joe Biden, Russian President Vladimir Putin, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron. Biden congratulated Lula for winning "free, fair and credible elections," joining the chorus of compliments from European and Latin American leaders. Markets braced for a volatile week ahead, with Brazil's real currency and international listings of Brazilian stocks falling as investors gauged speculation about Lula's cabinet and the risk of Bolsonaro questioning results. — Reuters

■ MASS WEDDING



Grooms dressed in traditional wedding attire gather in a mass wedding for over four thousand couples organised by the Zakat authority in capital Sanaa on Monday. — AFP

Trump's company 'cheated' tax authorities

NEW YORK: Former President Donald Trump's real estate company cheated tax authorities over a 15-year period, a New York prosecutor told a jury on Monday in her opening statement in the Trump Organization's criminal tax fraud trial.

The case is among the mounting legal troubles facing the 76-year-old Trump as he considers another bid for the presidency after losing in 2020.

The Trump Organization between at least 2005 and 2021 paid executives - including its chief financial officer, Allen Weisselberg - in perks such as rent and car leases without reporting those benefits to tax

authorities, said Susan Hoffinger, a prosecutor with the Manhattan district attorney's office. "This case is about greed and cheating, cheating on taxes," Hoffinger said. "The scheme was conducted, directed and authorized at the highest levels of the accounting department at the company," Hoffinger said the company benefited from the scheme by "keeping their trusted chief financial officer happy" and avoiding some taxes.

"Everybody wins here," Hoffinger said. "Of course, everybody but the tax authorities. The problem with doing it this way is that it's not legal." — Reuters

Grain ships sail despite Moscow's pullout from deal

KYIV: Ships brought grain from Ukrainian ports on Monday, suggesting Moscow had stopped short of reimposing a blockade that might have caused world hunger, despite suspending its participation in a UN programme to safely export grain from the war zone.

Air raid sirens blared across Ukraine and explosions rang out in Kyiv, sending black smoke into the sky as Russia rained missiles down in renewed air attacks. Ukrainian officials said energy infrastructure was hit including at hydro-electric dams, knocking out power, heat and water supplies.

Ukraine's military said it had shot down 44 of 50 Russian missiles. But strikes left 80 per cent of Kyiv without running water, authorities said, adding they hoped to restore it quickly.

Two people were reported injured in the Kyiv region.

Still, the resumption of food exports from Ukrainian ports suggested that at least one dire scenario had been averted for now. International officials had feared that Moscow would reimpose a blockade on Ukrainian grain, after Russia announced on Saturday that it was suspending its role in the UN-backed programme that escorts cargo ships through the Black Sea.

"Civilian cargo ships can never be a military target or held hostage. The food must flow," tweeted Amir Abdullah, the UN official who coordinates the programme.

Shortly afterwards, Ukraine confirmed that 12 ships had set sail. The 354,500 tonnes of grain they carried was the most



The Joint Coordination Centre officials board cargo ship Mehmet Bey as she waits to pass the Bosphorus strait off the shores of Yenikapi during a misty morning in Istanbul, Turkey, on Monday. — Reuters

in a day since the programme began, suggesting a backlog was being cleared after exports were interrupted on Sunday. But

shipments could be interrupted again, not least if insurers stop underwriting them. Chris McGill, head of cargo at Lloyd's

of London insurer Ascot, which has underwritten many of the shipments so far, said his company was pausing writing new cover for shipments from Monday "until we better understand the situation".

Insurance previously issued "still stands," he said. Most policies must be renewed on a seven-day basis.

Russia's missile strikes during the Monday morning rush hour repeated a tactic it has pursued this month of targeting Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, especially power stations.

"Instead of fighting on the battlefield, Russia fights civilians," Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said. "Don't justify these attacks by calling them a 'response'. Russia does this because it still has the missiles and the will to kill Ukrainians." — Reuters

Success is a mental attitude that translates into results



Dr Anchan C K

The writer is an international adviser

“Success breeds success.” Legendary soccer player, Mia Hamm, made this interesting remark. Success is a mental attitude that translates into tangible results. When you want to succeed, you will pull out all the stops to achieve your goal. When you are successful you tend to be more optimistic. Success makes you feel more righteous, more confident and more valuable. Therefore, you will present yourself with more confidence and confidence sells. Confidence assures your prospects that you believe in what you sell. People who succeed put in superhuman effort to meet

their target. Once they achieve success, they believe that they are invincible. It is this self-belief that carries them towards the next success. Hence there is no doubt that success will truly bring further success. When you are successful it is likely that you are doing the right things. And when you are rewarded with success you will tend to continue doing the right things. If what you are doing is working you will probably stick with it. What about the ones who failed? If you allow failure to change your psychological makeup, you will find it tough to

PEOPLE WHO SUCCEED PUT IN SUPERHUMAN EFFORT TO MEET THEIR TARGET. ONCE THEY ACHIEVE SUCCESS, THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE INVINCIBLE. IT IS THIS SELF-BELIEF THAT CARRIES THEM TOWARDS THE NEXT SUCCESS. HENCE THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SUCCESS WILL TRULY BRING FURTHER SUCCESS

break the mold. However, if you challenge your failure and work towards success, you can turn the tide. Smart people are willing to learn from whatever or whoever is teaching the lesson . Smart people always look for the lesson. Dumb people judge the teacher and miss the lesson. “Success has a much greater influence on the brain than failure,” says Massachusetts Institute of Technology neuroscientist Earl Miller, who led the research. He believes the findings apply to many aspects of daily life in which failures are left unpunished but achievements are rewarded in one way or another — such as when

your teammates cheer your strikes at the bowling lane. So for me it is really all about our attitude. A good attitude attracts more of the same to it and brings a happy and good life of abundance. For you are happy with whatever live brings, but a bad attitude pushes things away from you so that in the end, all you are left with is yourself and your bad attitude. Success is definitely very important in life and every one must create success in whatever they do, but blindly following artificial definitions of success is befooling oneself and choice lies with us only...

South Korea’s deadly crush was avoidable

JOYCE LEE

Proper crowd and traffic control by South Korean authorities could have prevented or at least reduced the surge of Halloween party-goers in alleys that led to a crush and the deaths of 154 people, safety experts said on Monday. The annual festivities in the popular nightlife area of Itaewon in Seoul also did not have a central organising entity, which meant government authorities were not required to establish or enforce safety protocols. District authorities for Yongsan, where Itaewon is located, discussed measures to prevent illegal drug use and the spread of Covid-19 during the Halloween weekend, according to a district press release. There was, however, no mention of crowd control. On Saturday when the tragedy occurred, roughly 100,000 people were estimated to be in Itaewon, an area known for its hills and narrow alleys. According to Seoul Metro, some 81,573 people disembarked at Itaewon subway station on the day, up from around 23,800 a week earlier and about 35,950 on Friday. But there were only 137 police officers in Itaewon at the time, the city of Seoul said. In contrast, at rallies by labour unions and by supporters of President Yoon Suk-yeol that drew tens of thousands in Gwanghwamun, central Seoul, on the same on Saturday, up to 4,000 police were deployed, a police official said. “Police are now working on a thorough analysis of the incident’s cause,” Minister of the Interior and Safety Lee Sang-min said on Monday. “It’s not appropriate to make hasty conclusions before the exact cause is determined - whether it was caused by a lack of police or whether there is something that we should fundamentally change for rallies and gatherings.” President Yoon has called for a thorough investigation into the cause of the crush as well as improvements in safety measures that can be used for large gatherings where there is no set organiser. While South Korea has a safety manual for festivals expected to attract more than 1,000 people, the manual presupposes an organising body in charge of safety planning and requesting government resources. Just two weeks earlier, the Itaewon Global Village Festival organised by a tourism association and sponsored by the city of Seoul and Yongsan district, had people wearing yellow vests directing the flow of movement and the main road was closed to car traffic. But on Saturday, there were just thousands of shops open for business, normal car traffic rules and tens of thousands of young people eager to celebrate Halloween without major Covid restrictions for the first time since the pandemic. — Reuters

Do Democrats deserve reelection?



Ezra Klein

The writer is an American journalist, political analyst, *New York Times* columnist, and the host of The Ezra Klein Show podcast

It’s often said that hindsight is 20/20. As far as politics goes, I’ve never believed it. Much punditry relies on what I’ve come to think of as the counterfactual fallacy. It goes like this: The party in power did X rather than Y. X didn’t work out as well as Democrats or Republicans hoped. They clearly should have done Y. We only get to run the tape once. We can never know if different decisions would have nudged us toward a better world or returned yet worse outcomes. But elections force an assessment of how the party in power has performed, despite the unknowability of other paths. And so, with Election Day nearing and voting under way all over America, I’ve been trying to work through my own answer to the question: How well did the Democrats do with the power they had, given the constraints they faced? I find it useful to think back to the three interlocking promises Democrats ran on. First and foremost, they ran on bringing competent, concerned governance to Covid. Second, they ran on a Franklin Roosevelt-size legislative agenda, believing this a Great Depression-like moment of rupture that demanded a new vision of what the state could and must do. And they ran vowing to restore the soul of America, to reestablish a civic promise and communal decency that Donald Trump and the Republican Party never understood and regularly betrayed. The Covid record is more mixed than I wish. Judged by what was promised in 2020, the Biden administration made remarkable strides. About 80% of Americans have had at least one vaccination, and anyone, anywhere in the country, can get shots and boosters with little effort and at no cost. Rapid tests rolled out slowly, but

IT GOES LIKE THIS: THE PARTY IN POWER DID X RATHER THAN Y. X DIDN’T WORK OUT AS WELL AS DEMOCRATS OR REPUBLICANS HOPED

they are here now, and for a while the government would send them, free, to your door. The US government bought up more Paxlovid than any other country, and it is now widely available. Masks are cheap and plentiful. The central tension of Biden’s legislative strategy is that it paired ambitions of astonishing scale with congressional majorities that barely existed. The Senate, in a technical sense, saw no majority at all: It’s a 50-50 split, and Democrats carry votes only because Vice President Kamala Harris has the constitutional authority to break ties. It is remarkable how much Democrats have done, even so. There were two sides to Biden’s long-term agenda: construction and care. The construction side — decarbonizing the country, building and repairing infrastructure, and investing in semiconductor production and scientific research — largely passed. And much of what passed is thrilling. Trump was much mocked for infrastructure weeks that almost never resulted in new infrastructure. Biden and the Democrats have set the conditions for an infrastructure decade that could transform what America makes and how it’s made.



And to my surprise, Biden has put invention at the center of his policymaking, and while we cannot yet know what fruits that will bear, it may prove his most lasting legacy. But the care side of Biden’s agenda — universal pre-K, the expanded child tax credit, subsidies for child and elder care, paid leave — collapsed almost entirely (the sole exception being an increase to the subsidies under Obamacare). Was that inevitable? This is murky territory, given the contradictory accounts that Biden and Sen Joe Manchin have given of their negotiations. Was there truly a \$1.8 trillion Build Back Better package that Manchin would have voted for? The Biden team thought they had a deal. Manchin says they never did. And at the end of the day, no one forced Manchin to decide child care wasn’t worth doing and child poverty wasn’t worth reducing. That so many in the Senate care so much for bridges and so little for bodies is a scandal. Still, if you’d told me in 2020 that the next Democratic president would have a 50-50 Senate, with Manchin as the hinge vote, and a House margin of just a handful of members, I would not have predicted that the Democrats could pass more than \$400 billion in climate investments or significant corporate tax increases or the most important infusion of cash and capital into scientific research in a generation. Three criticisms are worth airing. One is that Democrats could have gotten more of the care agenda passed by refusing to allow a separate vote on the infrastructure bill. The Biden administration believes now, and believed then, that it didn’t have the votes to tie the two together. That strategy ran an unacceptable risk of nothing passing. Given that Manchin proved perfectly willing to kill huge swaths of Biden’s agenda and let the administration twist in the wind for month after month, I suspect they’re right. But there’s no way to truly know. Another is that the American Rescue Plan was too large, and however well meaning the intentions behind it were, it was a handmaiden to inflation. I think the Biden administration erred on the right side of the ledger here. Unemployment is 3.5%. Workers got raises and stimulus checks. Poverty fell — sharply. The unemployed weren’t forced into indigency.

Learning and unlearning...

The dependency on antibiotics has grown over the years so much that most people do not feel comfortable unless they are prescribed these medications. No one has the patience or the strength to go through the normal period that would take to recovery. The impatience has had a price to pay as it has been noted that many deaths took place because the antibiotics was not effective enough.

The issue is a global challenge, and Oman will be hosting a global conference on antimicrobial resistance this month. The trends in antibiotics consumption has been looked upon by experts across the globe and now the decision-makers would also be part of the awareness process. In November, the Sultanate of Oman will be hosting a high-level global conference on antimicrobial resistance.

It is intriguing how in life whenever there is an easy solution the consequences get tougher. The situation reaches a point where when one really needs the help of antibiotics it is no more effective.

This is the third global conference and the previous two conferences had already seen collaborative work to tackle the risk of antibiotic resistance.

The conference is also intended to highlight the role of environment in the spread of AMR and the importance of surveillance and monitoring of both AMR and antimicrobial use across all three domains - humans, animals and the environment. It goes on to prove how connected everything is.

The easy way out is not useful in almost all cases. As a student in a boarding school which had a huge campus, a group of us found a short cut by jumping over a short fence. It was extremely convenient and we could reach the class quickly; until one day when a senior teacher got to know about this convenience. She always spoke very little but always left an impact.

"In life never take shortcuts," she had said. At that age I could only think about short cuts to reach the classroom. But as years passed the words got louder and



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the meaning was applicable to so many aspects of life.

Look at it this way - short cut to success: we might not have the experience to handle the pressure and the demand of being successful compared to being seasoned with time. Now does that mean we should not climb the ladder to success quickly? Probably can, but the success that comes with hard work and patience to cope with failure is simply hard to break under pressure. The person would know, "This will pass too."

This group of people would not think of giving up easily, but I am sure they will be open to learn from mistakes and adapt a new solution quickly. They will not remain adamant, and yet other times they will have confidence in their ideas and will continue to refine it further.

Giving up is easy but accepting the shortcomings to improve oneself requires an inner strength. This inner strength is probably one is born with or can be cultivated as we learn from life. After all we are all born with creativity and a call — some recognises them, while others don't, because they are busy trying to merge with the crowd or overtaken by the norms.

Life is about learning and unlearning. As we evolve how we study and what we study are also changing.

In the past, our main source of education was school, but now in this era of digital world the information is available at different levels. Just as the body has a mechanism to heal, the mind also has strength but what we probably need is the capability to handle thoughts such as to realise when we are indulging in negative thoughts and how to come out of them. And when it comes to Antimicrobial Resistance, it is not just the duty of the governments and the healthcare providers to take measures on this challenge. It is also important that we are all aware of the situation and work together in providing a solution.

If there is an information overload that is happening currently then let it be of awareness on health and knowledge that is beneficial for the individual and the community. Because end of the day what we need is wisdom.

GIVING UP IS EASY BUT ACCEPTING THE SHORTCOMINGS TO IMPROVE ONESELF REQUIRES AN INNER STRENGTH

SAFFRON HARVEST



An Afghan woman harvests saffron flowers in a field on the outskirts of Herat province on Monday. – AFP

US and allies turn to deterring war with North Korea as options dwindle

JOSH SMITH

The prospect of a new North Korean nuclear test underscores the limited options for Washington and its allies, who have embraced "detering" Pyongyang through major military drills that some current and former officials say may exacerbate tensions.

South Korea said in October that a new nuclear test would face an "unparalleled" response from the allies - but it's unclear what measures would not retread old ground.

Years of sanctions, diplomatic pressure, and shows of military force have not prevented North Korea from developing and expanding an arsenal of nuclear weapons and long-range ballistic missiles that could reach the United States.

Now that the North's nuclear weapons are mature and deployed, the United States and its allies are looking to simply dissuade the North from military action.

South Korean Defence Minister Lee Jong-sup said last week the focus of efforts to deal with North Korea should be shifted from curbing nuclear weapons development to deterring their use.

"We plan to expand the scope of

YEARS OF SANCTIONS, DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE, AND SHOWS OF MILITARY FORCE HAVE NOT PREVENTED NORTH KOREA FROM DEVELOPING AND EXPANDING AN ARSENAL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND LONG-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILES THAT COULD REACH THE UNITED STATES

our involvement in intelligence sharing, planning, exercises and drills," he told a panel of lawmakers. A ministry official said that Lee was not throwing his support behind the idea of acknowledging North Korea as a nuclear state, but rather was emphasising the immediate need to prevent North Korea from using the weapons.

"Lee is saying out loud what policy makers in Seoul and Washington are thinking - namely that while denuclearisation is the ultimate goal, deterring North Korea is the here-and-now priority," said Daniel Russel, a former senior US diplomat.

The United States and South Korea are in "lockstep" in their efforts to seek the "complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," a spokesperson for the US National Security Council said when asked about Lee's comments.

"We continue to prioritise diplomacy, but simultaneously continue to jointly strengthen deterrence and work to limit the advancement of (North Korea's) unlawful weapons programmes," the spokesperson said.

Some analysts saw Lee's

comments as the latest sign that Washington and Seoul are facing the reality that North Korea is a nuclear state. But they noted the focus so far has remained on deterrence rather than risk reduction, such as negotiating to cap the number of North Korean weapons and prevent them from proliferating.

US State Department spokesman Vedant Patel declined to specify what measures Washington would take if North Korea tested a nuclear bomb for the first time since 2017, but cited sanctions and military drills as

examples of tools it can use to "hold North Korea accountable."

Observers expect China and Russia would condemn a new nuclear test, but are unlikely to back new sanctions, which they say have failed and only harm ordinary North Koreans.

The newly released US Nuclear Posture Review says Kim Jong Un's regime would be annihilated if it ever attacked with nuclear weapons.

In early October, the commander of the US Navy's 7th Fleet said the rare deployment of an aircraft carrier to South Korea

"probably precipitated" part of a "tantrum" from Kim Jong Un.

Another major drill began on Monday with hundreds of South Korean and US warplanes, including a rare deployment of American F-35B fighters. The drills, a centrepiece of the allied response, have been met with new rounds of missile tests or military exercises by North Korea.

Patel has called suggestions that the drills are exacerbating tensions "baloney." Duyeon Kim, with the US-based Center for a New American Security, noted that rising tensions are not always correlated with drills.

"Normalising combined drills strengthens readiness and publicising them again is intended to deter North Korea and reassure the South Korean people," Kim said.

One senior former US defence official said that although the stepped up drills ensure readiness, the publicity and chest-beating surrounding them can be counterproductive. "They're doing it because they want to send a message to North Korea, hey, we mean business," he said. "But it's not helping." — Reuters



North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un oversees a missile launch at an undisclosed location in North Korea, in this undated photo. – Reuters

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VERSTAPPEN CLAIMS RECORD 14TH WIN

HAMILTON TAKES SECOND, PEREZ THIRD IN MEXICO



MEXICO CITY: Red Bull's Max Verstappen claimed a record 14th victory of the Formula One season by winning the Mexico Grand Prix on Sunday.

World champion Verstappen finished a comfortable 15.186 seconds ahead of Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes while Verstappen's Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez finished third on home soil.

It was the second win inside a week for Dutchman Verstappen, who also triumphed at the United States Grand Prix in Austin, Texas.

Verstappen has now beaten the record previously held by Michael Schumacher and Sebastian Vettel for the most wins in a single season.

"It has been an incredible year so far, we are definitely enjoying it and we'll try to go for more (victories)," said Verstappen.

Hamilton lamented his team's decision to choose medium and then hard tyre compounds while Verstappen went from softs to medium.

"I was close in the first stint, but the Red Bulls were too fast today

and they probably had the right tyre strategy," Hamilton said.

Perez was cheered loudly by a sell-out crowd.

"Unfortunately, it didn't work out today, but it is great to get third place here and be on the podium," Perez said.

George Russell finished a frustrated fourth for Mercedes, but clocked the fastest lap ahead of the Ferraris of Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc, both unable to find the pace to make any impact on the leading quartet.

Daniel Ricciardo was seventh for McLaren, after a mid-race collision for which he was given a 10-second time penalty, ahead of Esteban Ocon of Alpine, Lando Norris in the second McLaren and Valtteri Bottas of Alfa Romeo.

As the lights went out, Verstappen made a near-perfect start from pole position while, behind him, Hamilton fought his way past Russell to take second.

To the delight of his fans, Perez also passed Russell to take third.

After lap one, the Dutchman

held a lead of 1.39 seconds which he gently extended to 1.6 by lap 10 and 2.2 by lap 20 as the leaders ran in consistent formation, the race only punctuated by Stroll taking the first pit stop on lap 18.

Verstappen reported his soft tyres were deteriorating shortly before Perez came in after 23 laps to switch from soft to medium compounds, but his stop was hampered by a sticky rear wheel change and took five seconds.

He re-joined sixth.

Two laps later, Verstappen came in and out in 2.5 seconds, passing the lead to Hamilton, who was 5.5 seconds clear of Russell as the Dutchman re-joined third behind him.

Hamilton came in on lap 30 to switch to hards and re-joined third, Russell taking over as leader until lap 35, when he also pitted to take hard tyres. He came back in fourth and the leading group were back as they had been.

TYRE TURMOIL

"This tyre is not as good as the



medium," Hamilton said on team radio, prompting Mercedes to reply suggesting it would last longer than the medium, as taken by Red Bull.

Hamilton, however, was struggling for grip and impatient as he slipped 9.5 seconds adrift of the champion with Perez, third and pressing, only 1.9 seconds behind.

By lap 40, both Mercedes men were grumbling in unison about

the hard tyre's lack of performance.

Verstappen extended his lead to more than 10 seconds by lap 50, but Hamilton clung on.

"Are we on the wrong tyre?" Hamilton asked his team. "No, Lewis, we think we're on the right tyre and it'll get to the end. No sweat," replied his race engineer, Pete Bonnington.

With six laps to go, Mercedes' hard tyre gamble appeared to have

failed when two-time champion Fernando Alonso pulled off at turn one in his Alpine. It was a brief pause without any pitstops, leaving Russell frustrated in his requests for new rubber.

"Stay out," said Mercedes, only relenting on lap 70 to give him a chance to go for fastest lap

Red Bull have already claimed the constructors' championship. — AFP



Dominating display by Seeb in HM Cup

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, OCT 31

The AFC Cup champions continued their dominating performance in the domestic competitions as they defeated Al Nasr 2-0 in concluding match of last-16 stage of 2022-23 His Majesty's Cup Football Championship late on Sunday. With the defending champions advancing to the quarterfinals, the last-eight line-up was complete.

At Seeb Stadium, Juma al Habsi gave the hosts the lead earlier in the first half as he netted the opening goal in the 8th minute.

Abdulaziz al Maqbali doubled Seeb's lead as he scored the second goal in the 65th minute.

AL BASHAYER THROUGH

Earlier on Saturday, Al Bashayer snatched a crucial 1-0 win over hosts Al Wahda at Sur Sports Complex on Saturday.

Al Bashayer, coached under Iraqi coach Adnan Thaeer, managed to earn spot in the next stage of the prestigious championship.

For the Al Dakhiliyah Governorate team, Deoup netted the winner in the match and this goal was enough to move Al

Bashayer to the quarterfinals.

Al Oruba, Al Shabab, Al Nahda, Al Rustaq, Oman Club, Al Suwaiq, Al Bashayer and Seeb confirmed their presence in the quarterfinals after they posted key wins in the last-16 round.

QUARTERFINALS FIXTURES

In the first-leg quarterfinals fixtures, Seeb will take on Al Shabab at Seeb Stadium while Al Suwaiq will host Al Bashayer at Al Rustaq Sports Complex.

Oman Club will meet Al Rustaq in Seeb Stadium while Al Nahda will face off Al Oruba at Al Buraimi Sports Complex.



Arsenal's Reiss Nelson scores their third goal against Nottingham Forest. – Reuters

ARSENAL GO TOP AFTER FOREST THRASHING

ANDY JALIL
LONDON, OCT 31

Arsenal hit five goals without reply in their most emphatic win of the season against Nottingham Forest to restore their position at the top of the Premier League. Two of those goals were scored by Reiss Nelson who came on as substitute after the 27th minute injury to Bukayo Saka.

Gunnars manager, Mikel Arteta said: "We have been creating a lot without hitting the target enough in recent games so it was great to see us scoring so many. Today, the individual talent made the difference and it's really important we shared some fantastic goals around the team."

He added: "Big teams respond as quickly as possible and that's what we've done after our disappointment in the Europa League on Thursday."

Arteta praised Nelson's performance: "Not only me but all his team-mates, all the staff are so happy for him because he is a kid that is really changing, evolving,



Arsenal's Reiss Nelson, Ben White and Martin Odegaard celebrate a goal. – Reuters

and maturing. He's showing every day how much he wants it. He had the opportunity and he did extremely well."

Arsenal dominated from the start and went ahead with a fifth minute goal. Gabriel Martinelli passed to Saka on the right and then he darted into the box to meet Saka's cross and stooped to head into the net.

The Gunners continued to control the game even after Saka's injury in a nasty tackle from Renan Lodi which could have brought him a yellow card. Granit

Xhaka was brilliant in midfield and William Saliba patrolled the defence.

But they could not make use of the chances to score and Gabriel Jesus missed a fine chance for a second goal when his curling shot went just wide and in the 36th minute he shot over the bar after a pass from Xhaka.

Earlier Forest too missed a chance when Jesse Lingard broke through in the 32nd minute but his shot went wide.

It wasn't until the second half that Arsenal's goals came in

quick succession. They scored four within half an hour. Thomas Partey's pass split the Forest defence in the 49th minute and after quick passing between Xhaka and Jesus, Nelson's shot was parried by the goalkeeper but he followed up on the rebound to drive it home. Within three minutes Nelson found the net again, steering in a low centre by Jesus.

The fourth goal was a thumping drive from 20 yards by Partey after receiving a pass from Nelson in the 57th minute and finally, 19 minutes later Odegaard hit the fifth after Partey and Jesus combined for a pass to the Arsenal captain to complete a superb win.

Forest manager, Steve Cooper said: "We fell way short in terms of competing. It was always going to be a tough game but in competitive sport the bare minimum you have to do is stand up and be counted, fight and be hard to beat. We just didn't do that and it's frustrating. It ended up as painful viewing and painful for the players to play in."



Signing of partnership between Oman Sail and Oman Air.

Oman Sail welcomes Oman Air as official Airline Partner

MUSCAT: Oman Sail announced it has signed an agreement with Oman Air which will see the Sultanate of Oman's national carrier become the Official and Exclusive Airline Partner for all Oman Sail events through until 2024. Oman Air will also become the Official Airline Sponsor of the Oman Olympic Team throughout qualification for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

Dr Khamis al Jabri, Oman Sail CEO, said, "Oman Air's support for our sailors during a very busy period which culminates in the Paris 2024 Olympic Games will be invaluable in ensuring the athletes and their equipment arrive safely and ready to compete. We are very happy to join with Oman's national airline to represent the country as we make progress towards our ultimate ambition of winning an Olympic medal in sailing for Oman."

Eng Abdulaziz al Raisi, Oman Air CEO, said, "Oman Air is proud to join hands once again with Oman Sail in support of

the national sailing team and Olympic hopefuls throughout the qualification campaign. With this and many such initiatives, we continue to champion our talented sportspeople at home and abroad and put Oman on the map for major global sporting events. It's an honour to be the chosen airline for our sailors and we look forward to celebrating their success."

Oman Air supports a number of sporting and cultural events as part of its active social contributions programme. Meanwhile, it continues to promote Oman as a leading international sports tourism destination, as per Oman Vision 2040.

With a fleet comprising ultra-modern, fuel-efficient aircraft that feature luxuriously appointed interiors, the airline is renowned for its exceptional products and services, both in the air and on the ground, and for the signature Omani hospitality available to guests on every flight.

MIXERS CLINCH WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL TITLE



Mixers Team clinched the women's volleyball title after defeating Wadi Barangy 13-15, 16-15, 5-3 in the final on October 28. The one-day tournament was held in Bausher Club with the participation of 16 teams. The event was organised by Khalil al Balushi and Khalid al Balushi.

Bank Muscat, Vanderlande, OCT Mabela and Jotun win

MUSCAT: Vanderlande beat Ideal International by 6 wickets to claim their first win in a B division match of the Oman Cricket League 2022-23 on Friday.

Putting Ideal International to bat first, Vanderlande had the top hand claiming 6 wickets in the half-way mark of 15 overs of Ideal's batting.

Llewelyn Korada's 57 along with Abdul Ghani's 33 took Ideal's innings to 139 all out in 26 overs. Aiyappan B and Aasim Mohd claimed 4 and 3 wickets each.

In reply, Asfak Ahmed's quick fire 51 of 25 balls and a couple of 30 plus scores from Reddy Prasath and Vinayangam B saw Vanderlande chase the target in 14.3 overs.

In another B division match



Asif al Balushi of OCT Mabela

on Friday, Bank Muscat edged past Manis CT by 4 wickets. Put to bat first, Manis CT scored 207 runs in 29.1 overs. Mohammad Saleem and Adnan Ul Haq's 39 each was the key among the



Amir Mehmood of Bank Muscat receives man of the match award.

runs. Deepak K, Benny Mathew, Mohammad Umar and Zubair al Balushi claimed 2 wickets each for Bank Muscat. Chasing 207, opener Amir Mehmood's 55 off 44 balls and Ali Raza's 63 off 59 balls

sealed the game for Bank Muscat convincingly.

In a D division match on Friday, OCT Mabela beat RSTS FCC by 13 runs.

Electing to Bat first, OCT



Aiyappan B of Vanderlande

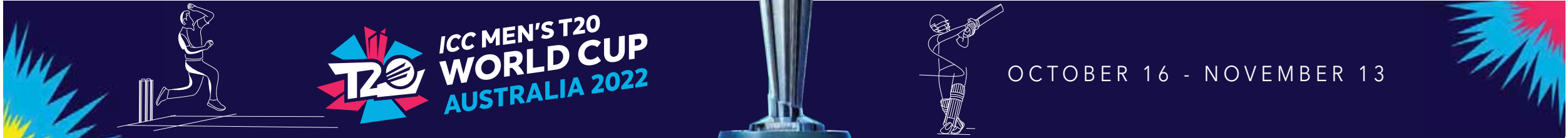
Mabela's opener Asif al Balushi scored a quick-fire 48 off 34 balls with cordial support from Shareef al Balushi (53 off 49 balls) taking their total to 169 in 20 overs.

Anzil N and Imtiaz KA pulled

back OCT Mabela to go on to a big total claiming 3 and 2 wickets each. OCT Mabela kept taking regular wickets to restrict RSTS FCC to reach the target. Issam al Balushi claimed 4 wickets in his spell to ensure OCT Mabela's win.

BRIEF SCORES

Ideal International 139 all out in 26 overs (Llewelyn Korada 57 (68) 6x4; Aiyappan B 4-17) lost to Vanderlande 143-4 in 14.3 overs (Asfak Ahmed 51 (25) 8x4, 2x6; Llewelyn Korada 4-31) by 6 wickets. Manis CT 207 all out in 29.1 overs (Mohd Saleem 39 (30) 8x4; Zubair al Balushi 2-25) lost to Bank Muscat 209-4 in 25.5 overs (Amir Mehmood 55 (44) 9x4, Ali Raza 63 (59) 7x4) by 4 wickets. OCT Mabela 169-8 in 20 overs (Asif al Balushi 48 (34) 5x4, Sharif al Balushi 53 (49) 5x4; Anzil N 3-35) beat RSTS FCC 156-9 (Puladith Omidu 36 (21) 4x4; Issam al Balushi 4-29) by 13 runs.



Skipper Finch hits form in Aussies win over Ireland

BRISBANE: Australia got their Twenty20 World Cup defence back on track with a 42-run win over Ireland at the Gabba in Brisbane on Monday.

Ireland, chasing Australia's 179-5, were all out for 137 in the 19th over to put Australia level on five points with leaders New Zealand, who have a game in hand, at the top of Group 1.

England, who play New Zealand on Tuesday, are third, two points behind Australia but with a superior net run rate, a factor that could become crucial in a tight group.

Ireland, also on three points, had outside hopes of reaching the semifinals before the match but they were blown away in the chase by the pace and inswing of Mitchell Starc and then by the scoreboard pressure of their 180-run target.

They slumped to 25-5 and handed the World Cup hosts a comfortable win despite a superb unbeaten 71 from Lorcan Tucker.

Australia captain Aaron Finch, who won the man of the match award for his 63 runs, said scoring had not been straightforward.

"It wasn't the easiest wicket, it was a lot slower than what we expected," Finch said.

"They changed their pace really well and bowled a lot of cutters early in the innings.

"It was hard to get a rhythm and we did well to get 179."

SCOREBOARD	
AUSTRALIA	
D Warner c Adair b McCarthy	3
A Finch c Adair b McCarthy	63
M Marsh c Tucker b McCarthy	28
G Maxwell c Tucker b Little	13
M Stoinis c Dockrell b Little	35
T David not out	15
M Wade not out	7
Extras (lb2, w13)	15
Total (5 wks, 20 overs)	179
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-60, 3-84, 4-154, 5-160	
Bowling: Little 4-0-21-2, Adair 4-0-59-0, McCarthy 4-0-29-3, Delaney 3-0-29-0, Hand 1-0-15-0, Dockrell 4-0-24-0	
IRELAND	
P Stirling c Cummins b Maxwell	11
A Balbirnie b Cummins	6
L Tucker not out	71
H Tector c sub b Maxwell	6
C Campher b Starc	0
G Dockrell b Starc	0
G Delany c Maxwell b Stoinis	14
M Adair st Wade b Zampa	11
F Hand b Zampa	6
B McCarthy c sub b Cummins	3
J Little run out	1
Extras (b1, lb2, w4, nb1)	8
Total (all out, 18.1 overs)	137
Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-18, 3-24, 4-25, 5-25, 6-68, 7-91, 8-103, 9-136	
Bowling: Hazlewood 3-0-24-0, Cummins 4-0-28-2, Maxwell 2.1-0-14-2, Starc 4-1-43-2, Zampa 4-0-19-0, Stoinis 1-0-6-1	



game, sometimes it comes off, sometimes it doesn't."

He stayed patient, playing the anchor role as Australia lost their first three wickets to tight Irish bowling.

IRELAND 'MAKING PROGRESS

His circumspect approach paid off and Finch profited after the Ireland attack began to falter under the pressure of an onslaught

from Marcus Stoinis, who blasted 35 off 25 balls.

Ireland started their run chase briskly but suffered a big blow when captain Andy Balbirnie was bowled by Pat Cummins for six off the last ball of the second over.

He was followed almost immediately by the dangerous Paul Stirling, who was caught at mid-off by Cummins from part-time spinner Glenn Maxwell for 11. Maxwell then had Harry

Tector caught at square leg with Ireland on 24 and the game was as good as over one run later when Starc clean bowled Curtis Campher for a duck.

Starc was bowling with real pace and he struck again with another beautiful inswinger to account for George Dockrell, leaving Ireland reeling at 25-5.

Tucker and Gareth Delany led a slight recovery until Delany skied to Maxwell trying to belt Stoinis

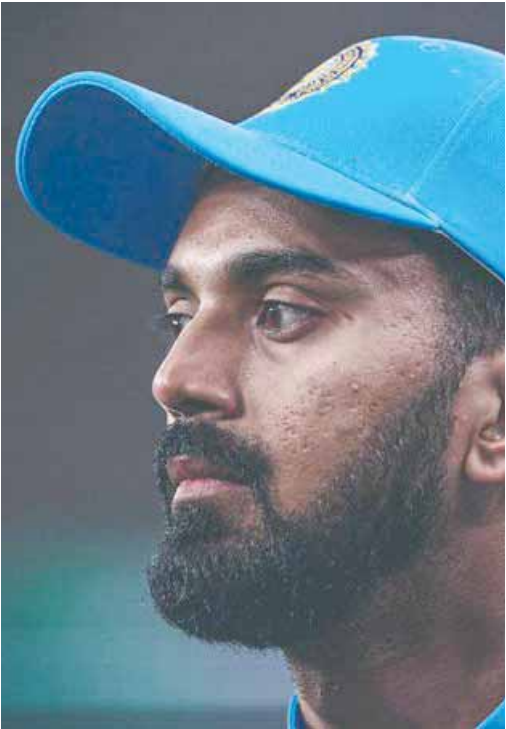
for six. Tucker, who had come in at number three, played a lone hand, amassing his 71 from 48 deliveries until he ran out of partners.

"We're making progress to keep up with these big teams -- looking at the scoreboard we thought it wasn't against us," captain Balbirnie said.

"Again the wickets column was a problem and who knows if someone had stayed with Tucker."

— AFP

Rohit, Kohli and Rahul rested for New Zealand tour



NEW DELHI: Indian captain Rohit Sharma and top order batsmen Virat Kohli and KL Rahul have been rested for the white ball tour of New Zealand next month but the trio will return for the Bangladesh series, Indian selector Chetan Sharma said on Monday.

India will play three Twenty20 matches and three one-day internationals in New Zealand from November 18, with Hardik Pandya to lead the side in the T20s while Shikhar Dhawan is captain for the 50-over games.

The rested batting trio are back in the squad when India tour Bangladesh in December for three ODIs and two test matches. India are currently in Australia for the T20 World Cup.

"Nobody requested to be

rested, the selectors have reports on load management to decide which players need rest. We're in constant touch with the team management and medical team," Sharma told reporters.

Sharma said India's injured fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah will not be risked in the test series in Bangladesh as they look to have him fully fit before Australia tour India early next year.

Bumrah failed to make the World Cup squad due to a flare-up of a back injury.

"The NCA (National Cricket Academy) medical team is looking after him very well, he'll definitely be involved against Australia but we're being cautious when it comes to the Bangladesh tour," Sharma said. — Reuters

SQUAD FOR NEW ZEALAND T20s

Hardik Pandya (captain), Rishabh Pant (vice-captain), Ishan Kishan, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshal Patel, Mohammed Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik

SQUAD FOR NEW ZEALAND ODIs

Shikhar Dhawan (captain), Rishabh Pant (vice-captain), Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Sanju Samson, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Shahbaz Ahmed, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik, Shardul Thakur, Deepak Chahar

SQUAD FOR BANGLADESH ODIs

Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul (vice-captain), Virat Kohli, Ishan Kishan, Rajat Patidar, Rahul Tripathi, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Yash Dayal, Deepak Chahar, Shardul Thakur, Shikhar Dhawan

SQUAD FOR BANGLADESH TESTS

Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul (vice-captain), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant, KS Bharat, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Shardul Thakur

England face four must-win games, says Collingwood

BRISBANE: England are now playing knockout cricket after a weather-disrupted campaign, declared assistant coach Paul Collingwood on Monday, and are targeting four wins to lift the T20 World Cup, starting with New Zealand in Brisbane.

England suffered a shock defeat to Ireland on the DLS method after a rain-interrupted match at the Melbourne Cricket Ground last week, then saw their eagerly awaited Ashes clash against Australia at the same venue washed out.

It leaves Group 1 wide open and they now face leaders New Zealand on Tuesday knowing that victory in their last two group games will almost certainly see them into the semifinals as one of the top two teams.

"There's a lot of excitement around because we know if we get it right in the next four games we've got an opportunity to win a World Cup," said Collingwood.

"We're almost into the knockout stage now with how we've got to go about our cricket with must-win games and this is why we play the game."

Anything less than victory against New Zealand will leave England dependent on beating Sri Lanka in Sydney in their final group match on Saturday and hoping other results go their way.

"It's a position you want to be in with an opportunity to win the World Cup and tomorrow kick-starts hopefully our momentum and our campaign," said Collingwood. "We put in a good performance tomorrow and that will give us a lot of confidence for the last three games."



Collingwood expected Tuesday's clash with the Group 1 leaders, who have won two matches and seen one rained off, to be close. "Going into a fixture against New Zealand history shows you that it's always been a tightly fought game," said the former England all-rounder.

"The bowlers are fresh, they're raring to go, and the batters have been able to do a lot of specific confidence work in the nets and understand how they can go about the task tomorrow night in what usually is a really good Brisbane wicket."

He defended under-fire Test captain Ben Stokes, who has never managed to fire in Twenty20 cricket, backing the all-rounder to come good when it matters. "The one person you want in your team when the pressure is on is Ben Stokes. We all know what he is capable of, not just match-winning innings, but match-winning innings under serious amounts of pressure."

— AFP

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Oman’s fiscal deficit to turn into surplus of 6% of GDP in 2022: WB report



QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, OCT 31

The Sultanate of Oman’s post-pandemic economic recovery is anticipated to strengthen over the medium term, buoyed by strong oil and gas prices, growth in hydrocarbon output, and comprehensive fiscal reforms, according to the World Bank’s latest Gulf Economic Update (GEU).

The report also noted that economies of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are projected to expand by 6.9 per cent in 2022 before moderating to 3.7 per cent and 2.4 per cent in 2023 and 2024.

“Oman’s GDP growth is forecast to reach 4.5 per cent in 2022 before moderating to an average of 3.2 per cent in 2023-24,” the World Bank report said.

“The overall fiscal deficit is expected to turn into a surplus of nearly 6 per cent of GDP in 2022 — the first surplus in almost a decade — reducing gross financing needs.

Similarly, the external balance is swinging back into surplus (6 per cent of GDP in 2022) — the

first surplus in 7 years — on the back of higher oil receipts and recovery in non-oil exports.”

Supported by higher hydrocarbon prices, the GCC region is expected to register strong twin surpluses in 2022 and continue over the medium term, according to the report. The regional fiscal balance is projected to register a surplus of 5.3 per cent of GDP in 2022 — the first surplus since 2014 — while the external balance surplus is expected to reach 17.2 per cent of GDP.

This World Bank report, titled “Green Growth Opportunities in the GCC,” examines the development of the green growth sectors and looks at the potential opportunities this could provide for the GCC countries.

The report also discusses GCC countries’ plans to decrease the use of fossil fuels to generate electricity, their aims to increase the capacity of renewable energy to power domestic electricity needs, and their goals to enhance the role of the private sector and reduce the role of the public sector.

At the same time, it looks at

how the climate agenda could be used to further diversify their economies in high growth sectors, including the upstream and downstream industries for the energy transition.

“There is an excellent and timely opportunity to diversify the economy further using a green growth strategy, and playing a leading role in the global transition to low-carbon economies,” said Issam Abousleiman, World Bank Regional Director for the GCC.

“The region could use the green growth transition to focus policies on developing green technologies and associated skilled labour that would reverse trends in productivity and enable the region to grow faster.”

The GCC countries’ total GDP is projected to be close to \$2 trillion in 2022. If the GCC continued business as usual, their combined GDP would grow to an expected \$6 trillion by 2050. However, if the GCC countries implemented a green growth strategy that would help and accelerate their economic diversification, GDP could have the potential to grow to over \$13 trillion by 2050.

OQ Chemicals and Röhm break ground on new MMA plant in Texas

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 31

OQ Chemicals, a wholly owned subsidiary of OQ — the Sultanate of Oman’s integrated energy group — and Röhm, a leading MMA producer and portfolio company of Advent International, officially broke ground on a new world-scale methyl methacrylate (MMA) plant. Röhm will construct new facility at OQ Chemicals’ production site at Bay City, Texas, USA.

OQ Chemicals — the world’s largest producer of oxo specialty chemicals — will supply the new plant with key raw materials and provide site services



and utilities to Röhm. To this end, OQ Chemicals has invested significantly in additional capacity for propionaldehyde and local infrastructure. **TURN TO P15**



Majan College SAOG

BOARD REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2022

Respected Shareholders

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Majan College SAOG (Majan University College), I am pleased to present this report on Majan’s financial and operating performance and the accompanying financial statements for the year ended 31st August 2022.

Business Environment

While the Government has undertaken to reduce overall expenditure, spending on basic services such as education as a percentage of total expenditure has been the highest. Education got the highest 17% out of a total of 40% allocated for the basic services in Oman year 2022 budget. This measure reduces the challenges on the private higher education sector. The challenges posed by the increasing competition, however, put extensive pressures on revenue growth.

Business Associates

Guided by our vision and mission, Majan College SAOG (Majan University College) offers programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels that address the needs of the local, regional and international markets in a competitive environment. Majan continues to enjoy a well-respected position among higher education institutions through its quality academic provisions. Majan maintains its academic long-standing partnership with the University of Bedfordshire in the United Kingdom which validates Majan’s undergraduate programmes in business, English and information technology disciplines. Majan hosts four University of Bedfordshire Master programmes (MBA and Masters in Computer Science and International Human resource Management and Applied Linguistics). Majan also hosts the University of Bradford Doctor of business Administration programme (DBA).

Commitment to Quality

Majan was the first higher educational institution to be institutionally accredited by Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education. It was accredited in December 2017 for a period of five years, now extended to six years. Majan goes through the institutional review by the University of Bedfordshire, an exercise that takes place every 5 years. The latest took place in year 2022 and the next review will be conducted in year 2027. The College maintains its commitment to enhance its academic provision and support to students through its transparent quality assurance measures.

Financial Performance

Majan’s financial performance was affected in the core business due to the impact of change to the entry criteria for postgraduate students since year 2020. However, that impact was minimised through the increase in investment income and other income. In comparison to the previous financial year, total income was decreased by 5% to be OMR 4.77 million. This was mainly from decrease in new and returning postgraduate students offset against increase in investment income and other income. Total expenses have decreased by 1% to be OMR 3.59 million. This was mainly from the decline in postgraduate fees income and corresponding reduction in affiliation fees. Therefore, net profit before tax decreased by 17% to be OMR 1.18 Million, however, Taxation has increased by 162% to be OMR 0.18 Million mainly because of deferred tax income

Audited statement of comprehensive income for the year ended 31 August 2022		
	2022 RO	2021 RO
Income		
Fee income	3,944,029	4,686,792
Investment income	580,020	301,631
Other income	247,602	39,458
Total income	4,771,651	5,027,881
Expenses		
Salaries and staff related costs	(2,287,735)	(2,187,994)
General and administrative expenses	(877,783)	(1,055,039)
Depreciation	(354,372)	(384,527)
Expected credit losses	(45,817)	(5,948)
Foreign exchange (losses) /gains	(25,592)	23,330
Total expenses	(3,591,299)	(3,610,178)
Profit before tax for the year	1,180,352	1,417,703
Income tax	(175,215)	(66,781)
Net profit after tax for the year	1,005,137	1,350,922
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,005,137	1,350,922
Basic and diluted earnings per share	0.011	0.015

Note: The complete accounts are available on Muscat Stock Exchange (www.msx.om)

on provisions on the impairment of fee receivables & fair value adjustment of investments FVPTL during prior period. Consequently, overall net profit after tax has decreased by 26% to be OMR 1 Million. Earnings per share has decreased from 15 Baiza per share to 11 Baiza per share.

Community Support

Majan recognizes its social responsibility and shares its resources with the Omani society through its contribution to the Ministry of Higher Education scholarships programme. As part of its training programme, Majan offers scholarships to its employees at the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Majan also operates a discount scheme for siblings and students with special needs and supports different charity organizations through its CSR budget and activities.

Dividend

Considering the annual financial performance, the liquidity requirements for operational needs. The board of directors recommends this year not to distribute any dividends.

Future Outlook

Today Majan is well positioned in the private higher education sector and is highly regarded. Despite the competition in the education sector, the management believes that the demand for private higher education will continue to grow in the future. Majan has strong management since its inception and will continue on growth strategies that maximize shareholder value whilst maintaining sustainable quality higher education.

Appreciation

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express my appreciation and gratitude to his Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his unlimited support and guidance to higher education. Our sincere thanks to the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation for its support to the private higher education sector. This has resulted in tremendous growth in the sector. It is our intention that Majan College SAOG (Majan University College) continues to contribute to the achievement of the vision of the country by continuously improving and enriching the standards of its academic programmes and its resources.

Dr. Salam Salim Al Mur Al Kindi
Chairman

Audited statement of financial position as at 31 August 2022

	2022 RO	2021 RO
Assets		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	3,448,621	3,751,026
Deferred tax asset	257,237	260,883
Total non-current assets	3,705,858	4,011,909
Current assets		
Fees and other receivables	1,157,200	802,394
Investments at amortised cost	6,418,857	6,660,453
Investments at fair value through profit or loss	1,322,350	1,329,682
Cash and cash equivalents	712,965	1,163,403
Total current assets	9,611,372	9,955,932
Total assets	13,317,230	13,967,841
Shareholders’ equity and liabilities		
Shareholders’ equity		
Share capital	9,000,000	9,000,000
Legal reserve	1,571,098	1,470,584
Retained earnings	1,342,554	437,931
Proposed dividends	-	1,305,000
Total shareholders’ equity	11,913,652	12,213,515
Liabilities		
Non-current liabilities		
Employees’ end of service benefits	566,933	610,360
Student security deposits	260,555	327,805
Total non-current liabilities	827,488	938,165
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	396,447	556,271
Provision for taxation	171,002	242,310
Withholding tax payable	8,641	17,580
Total current liabilities	576,090	816,161
Total liabilities	1,403,578	1,754,326
Total shareholders’ equity and liabilities	13,317,230	13,967,841
Net assets per share	0.132	0.136

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KR Group celebrates Omani Women’s Day

MUSCAT: Khimji Ramdas Group (KR Group), Oman’s reputable corporate, celebrated Omani Women’s Day at the KR Infra campus in Ghala as part of its commitment to diversity and inclusion in its workforce.

The event themed ‘Zahia – the flourish of womanhood’ was a shining example of the company’s efforts to develop and support Omani women encouraging them to excel in their fields and rise to a high level of global competitiveness.

The occasion was a grand affair, with 160 women in attendance, alongside KR Group directors and the senior management, women-owned SME businesses, and esteemed guests from various sectors, making the event memorable.

As part of the celebrations held on October 20, a powerful speech was delivered by Pankaj Khimji, Director, KR Group, emphasising the role of women in the organisation and commending



their contributions and fruitful efforts to push the organisation’s growth and culture forward. Women from different walks of life spoke about their success stories and life trials and tribulations, allowing the audience to hear their experiences firsthand.

Participation included fashion mogul Ashwaq bint Abdullah al Sinaniyah, KR Group’s Hanan bint

Sabeel al Balushiyah, Hanifa bint Rahi al Balushiyah and Ahlam bint Mohammed bin Murad al Raisiyah, accompanied by an awe-inspiring performance by Omani violinist Tahira Jamal to conclude the celebration. The event also served as a space for local women-owned SMEs to set up and display their products for the audience, as well as a live portrait painting

of the exhibition done by two renowned Omani artists.

Expressing her gratitude for the efforts and contributions Omani women have achieved across a variety of sectors and fields, Kanan Khimji, Director of KR Group, said, “His late Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said – may he rest in peace – has dedicated October 17 to the Omani women whose loyalty and perseverance pushed this great nation forward. Omani women are set for excellence wherever they are; their hard work and contribution across corporate and societal spheres are magnificent. KR Group believes in setting an inclusive framework for our workplaces to empower women, and everyone, to strive and lead. Our various training and management programmes will continue setting the bar higher to champion equal opportunity.”

“Her Highness the Honourable Lady Assayida Ahad Abdullah Hamed al Busaidi, Spouse of the Sultan of Oman is leading the

way in highlighting the significant role Omani women play and have played throughout the nation’s history, whether in the workplace, in culture, or society. I also want to express my gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his wise leadership, and role in empowering the women of this country and supporting Oman’s newer generation of powerful women. This has allowed them to play a significant role in the sustainable growth of the nation’s economy and across all sectors, making their presence felt local, regionally, and internationally,” she added. The Khimji Ramdas Group places great value on its people and strongly believes in empowerment and equal opportunity through regular training programmes, workshops, and ongoing investments in its workforce. The company is laying the foundation for and giving its employees – both men and women, the tools they need to become leaders in their fields.

Bank Nizwa joins tree planting campaign

MUSCAT: Bank Nizwa, the leading and most trusted Islamic bank in the Sultanate of Oman, Participated at a tree plantation drive under its Masoliyati volunteer programme in collaboration with Authority of Environment in honour of Omani Tree Day.



Over 200 volunteers participated in the plantation campaign at Ras Al Shajer Nature Reserve in Qurayat, including C-Suite executives, staff members and their families. As part of its effort to create a greener ecosystem, the company planted a variety of trees together.

By adopting this eco-friendly practice, the company is maintaining its ESG values and creating a more sustainable environment.

“Omani Tree Day offers a great opportunity for the community to contribute to the local tree scape in a positive way. Our awareness of the importance of a healthy planet has led to a heightened commitment to tree planting and other biodiversity initiatives. Bank Nizwa is committed to ensuring our plans align with Oman’s Vision 2040 agenda of preserving and protecting the country’s environment by adhering to reforestation and habitat improvement ventures,” HH Sayyidah Wisam bint Jaifar al Said, Head of marketing and Corporate communications at Bank Nizwa.

BankDhofar strategic partner of OER Business Summit 2022

MUSCAT: Cementing its position as one of the leading financial institutions in the Sultanate of Oman, BankDhofar recently took part in OER Business Summit 2022 as Strategic Sponsors. The high-profile summit was recently held at the Sheraton Hotel Muscat under the auspices of Shaikh Salim bin Mustahail al Maashani.

The summit, which touches upon business aspects, focused this year on human resources. The panel discussion titled ‘Growing and developing talent within – Lifeline of organisations’ focused on the importance of grooming national talents and developing their skills. Dr Khalid bin Salim al Hamadani, Chief Human Resources Officer at BankDhofar participated in the panel discussion.

He shared his thoughts and experience on the best practices to enrich the knowledge and skills of the talents within the



organisation.

Elaborating on that, Dr Khalid bin Salim al Hamadani, Chief Human Resources Officer at BankDhofar said: “At BankDhofar, we have a clear vision and strategy that focuses on nurturing our talents and developing their skills. We understand that our organisation’s performance goes hand-in-hand with the performance of our talents.

Thus, we ensure to provide them with the best working environment and learning and development opportunities. The

OER Business Summit 2022 was a good platform to share thoughts and insights with practitioners in this important field.”

BankDhofar has been pioneering in setting training and qualification strategies within its general strategy, whereby all training programmes and opportunities are linked to employees’ career paths. The integrated training programmes, presented by the Performance Academy, are considered as a qualitative investment in human capital.

Bank Muscat continues 40th Anniversary celebrations with special draws for customers

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has launched a series of exciting promotions for the benefit of its Personal Banking customers on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the bank.

The bank has showcased 3 special offers as part of the campaign, which will extend for two months and seeks to reward customers for using cards and digital payment options in their day-to-day lives. These include draws for new Visa Credit Card applicants, a special raffle draw for Visa Credit Cardholders for their, international and online spends and cash prizes to lucky winners who pay their utility bills through Bank Muscat’s mBanking app or Internet banking.

The bank has announced that

its first promotion is meant for all new and existing personal banking customers who apply for a new Visa credit card over a two-month period. All new cardholders will be entered into a raffle draw wherein 40 lucky winners per month will be rewarded with Apple iPads.

The second promotion features a special draw for all new and existing Visa Credit Cardholders who use their cards for international spends on POS and E-Commerce. Customers will get one chance to enter the draw for every RO 50 spent using their Visa Credit Card during the 2-month long promotional period. Apple iPads will be distributed to 40 lucky winners per month.

The third special promotion is meant to reward personal banking customers who pay their electricity and water bills through the bank’s



omnichannel Mobile and Internet banking platform. 40 winners per month will be chosen by raffle draw from amongst those eligible participate in the draw, and each winner will win up to RO 40 in cashbacks.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdulnasir al Raisi, General Manager – Personal Banking, Bank Muscat, said: “Bank Muscat is delighted to celebrate the 40th anniversary of its successful journey and dedicated to serving



our community by launching this special campaign that promotes e-payments including Visa Credit Cards and the bank’s award-winning digital banking platform for the benefit of its customers.

The bank remains committed to its responsibility in the continuation of progress and development by focusing on creativity and innovation to achieve more success. We thank all our customers for their strong trust in our large bouquet of

market-leading products and services and promise to continue to launch new services that meet their ever-growing aspirations and needs.”

Bank Muscat’s contactless Visa Credit cards are a popular option for customers for both online and point-of-sale (POS) transactions. The bank caters to the largest family of customers in the Sultanate of Oman and offers a wide range of Visa Credit cards with benefits that are closely attuned and personalised as per the needs of different customer segments.

Visa Cards offered by the bank include the Private Banking Infinite, Asalah Visa Signature Credit Card, Al Jawhar Visa Platinum Card, Visa Gold Credit Card, Oman Air Visa Credit Card and the Visa Classic Credit Card.

Buy a Kia & get a chance to win fully paid trip to watch Fifa World Cup Qatar



MUSCAT: Own a Kia and get a chance to win a fully paid trip to watch Fifa World Cup event in Qatar. The campaign will end on November 4, 2022. Kia customers owning a brand new Kia can get a chance to scratch & win more than 100 match tickets where they can witness teams like Belgium, Brazil, Germany, Japan and more, LIVE in action.

Apart from Fifa Qatar match tickets, customers will also get comprehensive service up to 50,000 kms and 1 year insurance. (Conditions apply. Please visit Kia showroom for details.).

In Oman Kia has a fantastic and exciting range of vehicles to choose from. They include the Kia Sportage. The all-new Sportage is equipped with comprehensive range of powerful, responsive and efficient powertrains. A 2.0 RVC 4WD with Nu 2.0 MPI churning 157 hp at 19.5 kg.m torque. This is paired to a 6-speed AT. The Sportage is also available as 1.6T 2WD SRF, 1.6T 2WD SPL and 1.6T 4WD SPL with Gamma 1.6T GDI with 176 HP and 27 kg.m. torque. These are paired to a 7-speed DCT.

The interior of the all-new Sportage plays with boldness in character. The interior offers a unique high-tech environment that is visually impressive, as well as spacious and intuitive. Throughout the cabin, the highest quality materials that are opulent to touch have been used, while dynamic and vibrant colour options add vibrancy and energy.

Fully immersive, in-car sound is delivered to the occupants of the all-new Sportage via an 8” audio display system and steering audio control. The Sportage is also equipped with rear AC vent, Bluetooth with voice recognition, Android auto and car play, drive mode select, remote engine start, paddle shifter and more.

The K5’s powerful and angular design language represents another chapter of boldness and passion for the brand. In terms of performance, the K5 makes a fine mark with a 2.5L GDI engine dishing out 191 HP and 25.1 KG.M. Torque.

Reliable International Automotive (RIA), the distributor for Kia in Oman provides a rewarding ownership experience for customers. Excellent product attributes and unmatched facilities easily ensure their absolute satisfaction, every mile of the way. No wonder then that Reliable International Automotive has been ranked amongst the top Kia distributors worldwide.



Softs limping, diesel boosts crude oil



OLE S HANSEN

Commodities trading was mixed during this past week, with strength across the energy sector being offset by weakness in agriculture – especially the soft sector which dropped to a one-year low led by continued weakness in coffee and cotton.

The industrial metal index showed a small gain, with focus on developments in China following the end of the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, and the dollar – which traded softer on the week.

Meanwhile, precious metals found some support following a change in sentiment across bonds and the dollar on speculation that we may approach peak hawkishness from the US Federal Reserve.

The latest recovery in gold followed increased speculation that the Fed is preparing to downshift in pace of rate hikes by early next year. The idea being that the FOMC's willingness to offer time to assess the economic impact of the rapid pace of rate hikes and quantitative tightening already seen.

However, some of the initial gains faded towards the end of the week after the dollar showed renewed strength especially against the euro after the ECB surprised to the dovish side, as well as the Japanese yen after the Bank of Japan maintained its yield cap and the government announced massive fiscal stimulus.

With the Bank of Japan not allowing government bond yields to adjust, this risks adding to the yen's weakness as long as other major central banks are not in easing mode.

Crude oil supported by tight fuel supply outlook.

Crude oil remains on track for a second week of gains but for now without challenging

resistance indicating a market still struggling for direction with no overriding theme being strong enough to set the agenda.

Strength this week has been driven by a continued developing tightness in the fuel product market, US exports of crude and fuels setting a weekly record, the weaker dollar as well as strong buying from China as refineries there plan to boost fuel exports through the end of the year

While crude oil has been mostly rangebound since July, the fuel product market has continued to tighten as supplies in Europe and the US have become increasingly scarce, thereby driving up refinery margins for gasoline and distillate products such as diesel, heating oil and jet fuel.

The focus in terms of tightness remains the northern hemisphere product market where low stocks of diesel and heating oil continues to raise concerns. The market has been uprooted by the war in Ukraine and sanctions against Russia, a major supplier of refined products to Europe. In addition, the high cost for gas has supported increased switching activity from gas to other fuels, especially diesel and heating oil. This tight market situation was recently made worse by the Opec+ decision to cut production from next month.

While the continued release of US (light sweet) crude from its strategic reserves will support production of gasoline, the Opec+ production cuts will primarily be provided by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE – all producers of the medium/heavy crude which yields the highest amount of distillate.

As long as the product market remains this tight, the risk of seeing lower crude oil prices – despite the current worry about recession – seems to be low so we maintain our forecast for a price range in Brent for this quarter between \$85 and \$100, with the tightening product market increasingly skewing the risk to the upside.

(The writer is Head of Commodity Strategy, Saxo Bank)

Opec raises long-term oil demand view, calls for investment

ABU DHABI: Opec raised its forecasts for world oil demand in the medium- and longer-term in an annual outlook released on Monday and said \$12.1 trillion of investment is needed to meet this demand despite the energy transition.

The view from the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, in its 2022 World Oil Outlook, contrasts with that of other forecasters which see oil demand reaching a plateau before 2030 due to the rise of renewable energy and electric cars.

Another decade of oil demand growth would be a boost for OPEC, whose 13 members depend on oil income. The group has been arguing that oil should be part of the energy transition and that focus by investors on economic, social and governance (ESG) issues has worsened an investment shortfall.

“The overall investment number for the oil sector is \$12.1 trillion out to 2045,” Opec Secretary General Haitham al Ghais wrote in the foreword to the report, which said the figure was up from last year's estimate.

“However, chronic underinvestment into the global oil industry in recent years, due to industry downturns, the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as policies centred on ending financing in fossil fuel projects, is a major cause of concern.”

Opec made a shift in 2020 when the pandemic hit demand, saying it would eventually slow after years of predicting ever-increasing consumption.

In the report, Opec maintained



A 3D-printed oil pump jack in front of the Opec logo in this illustration picture. – Reuters

CHRONIC UNDERINVESTMENT INTO THE GLOBAL OIL INDUSTRY IN RECENT YEARS, DUE TO INDUSTRY DOWNTURNS, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, AS WELL AS POLICIES CENTRED ON ENDING FINANCING IN FOSSIL FUEL PROJECTS, IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF CONCERN.

its view that world demand will plateau after 2035.

Other predictions from companies and banks see oil demand peaking earlier. The International Energy Agency on Thursday for the first time in its history of modelling said demand for all fossil fuels was set to peak, with oil demand levelling off in the

middle of the next decade.

The report said world oil demand will reach 103 million barrels per day in 2023, up 2.7 million bpd from 2022. The 2023 total demand is up 1.4 million bpd from last year's prediction. Opec also raised its demand forecasts for the medium term to 2027, saying the figure is up by almost 2 million bpd by the end of the period from last year.

It said the upward revision reflects a more robust recovery now seen in 2022 and 2023 and a “strong focus on energy security issues” leading to a slower substitution of oil by other fuels such as natural gas, whose price has soared due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

By 2030, Opec sees world

demand averaging 108.3 million bpd, up from 2021, and lifted its 2045 figure to 109.8 million bpd from 108.2 million bpd in 2021. The group had lowered the 2045 projection over the last few years.

Opec and its allies, known as Opec+, are again cutting supply to support the market. The report sees supply restraint continuing in the medium term, with OPEC output in 2027 lower than in 2022 as non-Opec supply grows.

Still, Opec is upbeat about its later prospects, seeing its market share rising. US tight crude supply is seen peaking after the late 2020s, rather than around 2030 last year. “Oil is expected to remain the number one fuel in the global primary energy mix,” the report said. — Reuters

OQ Chemicals, Röhm break ground on new MMA plant in Texas

FROM PAGE 13

Röhm, on the other hand, will employ its latest proprietary production technology, LiMA (Leading in Methacrylates). The new plant — targeted for completion by early 2024, — will produce 250,000 metric tonnes of MMA annually and create 70 direct jobs. Government officials and senior executives from Röhm, OQ and OQ Chemicals, and Advent International attended the groundbreaking ceremony.

Dr Oliver Borgmeier, CEO of OQ Chemicals, said: “With our project ‘Propel’, short for ‘Propyls Elevated’, we are expanding portfolio applications whilst supporting Röhm's new MMA

plant with key raw materials and site services.

Our business in North America is strong, sustained, and successful, and the Bay City site is a core site for OQ Chemicals.

Our significant investment in additional capacity for propionaldehyde and infrastructure there emphasises its importance and the trust we put in the Bay City site and its employees.”

“This groundbreaking marks a milestone of the cooperation between our organisations. As we say at OQ: Together, we perform and grow. Our joint project fosters the sustainable growth of our companies and boosts their performance, building on the

expertise and the great people that all parties bring to the table,” added Hilal al Kharusi, Chief Executive Commercial & Downstream at OQ, the parent company of OQ Chemicals.

Speaking about the event, Dr Michael Pack, CEO of Röhm, commented: “Today is a historic moment for Röhm. The new plant will be the first to employ our unique LiMA technology on a large industrial scale.

The project is an important signal to our customers, worldwide. The additional capacities will enable us to serve the increasing demand of MMA and support the reliability of our supply chain towards our customers globally.”

“With the LiMA plant, Röhm will strengthen their technological competence and further expand their leading market position”, explains Ron Ayles, Managing Partner at the financial sponsor Advent International.

“We are very pleased to have OQ Chemicals on board – a trustful partner to realise this groundbreaking technology. In addition, we want to thank the local authorities who have been very supportive to ensure the success of this project.”

Headquartered in Germany, OQ Chemicals manufactures a portfolio of over 70 oxo intermediate and derivative chemicals from six plants located in Europe and the United States.

Oman records increase in electricity and water production

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's total electricity and water production as of end of August increase by 1.6 per cent and 5.4 per cent respectively. The total electricity production in Oman increased to 28,527 gigawatts per hour, according to the latest report by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The Governorate of Dhofar recorded an increase in the total electricity production by 8.5 per cent to reach 2,847.4 gigawatts

The total electricity production in Oman increased to 28,527 gigawatts per hour, according to the latest report by NCSI.

per hour. The governorates of North and South Al Batinah and Al Dhahirah also recorded an increase in the total electricity production by 6.3 per cent to reach 18,559.8 gigawatts per hour.

The Sultanate of Oman's net electricity production until the end of August 2022, which includes



the purchases of the Oman Power and Water Procurement Company (OPWP) and Rural Areas Electricity Company (Tanweer), by regions reach 27,604.2 gigawatts per hour, an increase of 1.5 per cent.

The largest amount of net electricity production came from the Governorate of Dhofar, with an increase of 8.9 per cent to reach 2,713.1 gigawatts per hour. The governorates of North and South Al Batinah and Al Dhahirah recorded an increase in net

electricity production by 6.2 per cent to reach 17,927.1 gigawatts per hour.

On the other hand, the total amount of water produced in the Sultanate of Oman increased by 5.4 per cent to reach 341.0921 million cubic metres until the end of August.

The governorates of Dhofar and Muscat recorded an increase in water production by 8.7 per cent and 8.6 per cent, respectively, compared to the same period last year.

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Lisu.. an iconic element of the Omani traditional dress

An exhibition titled "Lisu" featuring 47 colourful paintings that reflected Omani heritage was organised by a group of 26 Omani artists at Bait Al Zubair to highlight the historical significance of the scarf.... **P20**

Celebrating trees as an important element in the nutritional system

By Hawa al Bellucci

THE GEOGRAPHY GROUP at the College of Arts and Social Sciences at Sultan Qaboos University celebrated the Omani Tree Day which falls on October 31.

The celebration is a reminder of its material and moral value to society, as the Omani environment is rich in many tree species varying in qualities and characteristics according to their different

environments.

The Sultanate of Oman annually celebrates this day, which the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said dedicated to the Omani tree, due to its great importance to individuals, society and the environment. The government has enacted laws that seek to preserve it.

The event included a lecture on local trees in the Omani environment, delivered by Engineer Khalfan bin Salem al Farsi, Director of the Animal Control and Licensing Department at the Ministry of Agriculture,

Fisheries and Water Resources, in which the types, characteristics, and locations of their spread were highlighted, including, for example:

The Sarh (Maerua Crassifolia) is a member of a large family. It stretches up to 9 metres high, it contains many branches and sometimes covered with thorns. The leaves are small and simple. The flowers are green in groups. They are spread in small numbers scattered in all regions of the Sultanate of Oman in valleys and plain areas.

Ghaf (Prosopis Cineraria): a tree of the family of corneae and is one of the largest local trees in size, height 2-20 metres, a dusty green tree, few and short thorns, feathery compound leaves, greenish-yellow flowers, the fruit is a straight red horn, the seeds are oblong brown. It spreads in all governorates and regions of the Sultanate of Oman, especially sandy areas, and the eastern region contains the largest concentration of this tree.

Al-Elaan (Juniperus Macropoda): A perennial, evergreen, aromatic tree of the coniferous family, about 10 metres high, and spread mainly in the interior region

of the heights of Al Jabal Al Akhdhar and Jabal Shams.

Frankincense (Boswellia sacra): tree up to 5 metres high, with a single trunk or several trunks arising from the base crust and leafy, scaly small branches and wild densely, leaves successive, gathered at the ends of the branches individual feathers oblong, flowers in the form of clustered axillary clusters At the tips of the branches its colour is yellow and turns to red and then to black. The fruit is an inverted capsule in the shape of a single seed. It grows naturally in the arid region of the mountains of Dhofar.



READ

GREEK AND ROMAN ART BY SUSAN WOODFORD

It traces the daring innovations of those who, defying traditional wisdom, explored new ideas; it describes the noble struggles of sculptors and painters to portray both the complexities of the human form and the richness of human emotions.



SPECIES

A tiny bird found only in the mountain tops of New Zealand's South Island has topped the pecking order in the country's annual bird of the year election. — dpa



LIFESTYLE

An Afghan farmer harvests rice in a field in Qarghayi district of Laghman province on October 31, 2022 — AFP





Cocoa farmers trial new scheme to save chocolate from climate change

CHOCOLATE IS UNDER threat from climate change, but farmers in Ghana are trialling an innovative “agroforestry” scheme to protect cocoa crops from its impacts.

The “Sankofa” project in the Ahafo region of the West African country involves planting cocoa seedlings among shade and fruit trees and other crops to produce a healthy microclimate and added income for farmers.

Ghana is a major cocoa producer, but farmers in the country say yields have fallen in recent years, hit by scorching heat, drought, erratic rains and increased pests due to climate change.

Ahead of the UN Cop27 climate talks in Egypt, Fairtrade campaigners warn that without moves to support farmers with finance, fair prices and action on global warming, their future — and that of chocolate — is in doubt.

In Ghana, the Sankofa project, which means “going back”, and is as witch from conventional chemical — using monoculture cocoa farming to a more traditional approach, aims to help farmers cope with the changing climate around them.

The “dynamic agroforestry” approach plants new cocoa seedlings among fast-growing timber trees that provide a top layer of canopy to protect the shade-loving cocoa from the sun and heat, and species such as avocado, plantain and oranges to provide other sources of income.

Crops including yam, cassava, nitrogen-fixing mucuna beans, tomatoes and chillies also grow in between the lines of cocoa, and “biomass” trees are planted so branches can be cut for natural mulch in an organic system that avoids artificial fertilisers and pesticides.

It also helps the climate fight by avoiding slash-and-burn agriculture and storing carbon in the trees.

The process has been developed by Fairtrade Africa, the International Trade Centre (ITC), Swiss chocolate company Halba and other partners, and delivered through KKFU, a farming co-operative which produces 10% of Ghana’s cocoa, and there are now nearly 400 farmers implementing it.

One of the first farmers to sign up, John Kwabena Narh, said he was determined to try it following some fruitless years on his farm.

He has planted up new plots and has rolled out some of the principles, including shade trees and cutting out chemicals,

across his whole farm.

Benefits include far more seedlings surviving their first year than on a conventional farm, fewer pests, less money spent on chemicals — and on medical bills due to sickness caused by using pesticides.

His farm is also alive with pollinators such as butterflies.

“Based on the advantages I have derived from the project, I would love for other farmers to

The benefits allow him to plan for the future, and he said: “With planting of trees and introducing adaptation and mitigation measures, I’m very confident I can thrive in the face of the changing climate.”

Fairtrade youth advocate and cocoa farmer Deborah Osei-Mensah, who is going to Cop27, warned climate change was an issue of global food security, and if cocoa did not give farmers the



get the same benefits,” he said.

“When I started off, people thought I was crazy for adopting this approach but now they want to join.”

Sadick Kwaku Abanga has been able to convert a patch of rocky, sunbaked hillside into a successful dynamic agroforestry plot.

He employs techniques such as “banana irrigation”, placing banana or plantain stems around the base of the cocoa to release moisture over a long period, and says the shade trees protect seedlings and make it easier to work on the farm.

livelihood they needed, they would change to other sources of income.

“Everybody is losing, it’s not just farmers losing their livelihood, it’s the chocolate, the coffee, the fruit, everything you want to take every day, is going, so it is better to save their livelihoods,” she said.

She called for farmers to receive fair prices for their cocoa to help them invest in a sustainable future, as well as finance for programmes that help them cope with global warming, and for action on climate change from world lead-

FASHION

Designer Thebe Magugu brings South African fashion to global stage



CELEBRATED SOUTH African fashion designer Thebe Magugu hopes his success will inspire other young people on the continent.

Magugu recently launched a new collection with global sportswear brand Adidas. His clothes have been worn by celebrities such as Rihanna and Miley Cyrus, and in 2019 he won the prestigious LVMH Prize for young designers.

“I’m particularly proud of it because I think it showed people that if I can do it, someone from Galeshewe township and (with) a lot of hardships along the way... all of those people can do it too,” said the 29-year-old from his studio in Johannesburg. — Reuters



DISCOVERY

Meteorite that smashed into Mars shook planet, Nasa says

SCIENTISTS WHO STUDY Mars on Thursday revealed the remarkable Christmas gift they received from the planet last year.

On December 24, 2021, a meteorite hit Mars’ surface, triggering magnitude 4 tremors, which were detected by Nasa’s InSight spacecraft — which landed on the planet four years ago — some 2,200 miles (3,500 kilometres) away.

The true origin of this so-called marsquake was only confirmed when the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (MRO) was able to take a picture of the newly formed crater created by the hit when it flew over the impact site less than 24 hours later.

The image is impressive, showing blocks of ice that were spewed up onto the planet’s surface around the 492-foot (150-metre) wide and 70-foot (21-metre) deep hole.

The crater is the largest ever observed since the MRO

began its Mars orbit 16 years ago.

And though meteorite impacts on Mars are not rare, “we never thought we’d see anything that big,” Ingrid Daubar, who works on the InSight and MRO missions, told reporters at a press conference on Thursday.

Researchers estimate that the meteorite itself would have measured between 16 to 39 feet across. An object of that size would have disintegrated in Earth’s atmosphere before falling to the ground here.

“It is simply the biggest meteorite impact on the ground that we have heard since science has been done with seismographs or seismometers,” said planetology professor Philippe Lognonne, who participated in two studies related to the observation published in the journal Science Thursday.

Nasa released an audio recording of the collision, which was made — AFP



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AROUND THE WORLD

ART

'Girl with a Pearl Earring' back on display in Dutch museum



JOHANNES VERMEER'S masterpiece "Girl with a Pearl Earring" was back on display at a museum in The Hague on Friday, a day after being targeted by climate activists.

Three men were arrested on Thursday after they glued themselves to the Dutch master's famous 1665 painting at the city's Mauritshuis museum during peak visiting hours.

"We are glad to say that at 3:30 pm (1330 GMT) the 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' was put back in her rightful spot in the Mauritshuis by members of our staff," the museum said.

"We are incredibly grateful that The Girl remained undamaged and is back in her familiar place so quickly," museum director Martine Gosselink added.

Vermeer's work — which has inspired a best-selling novel and a Hollywood movie — was examined in the museum's conservation studio and found to be undamaged, the museum added.

The climate activists, three Belgians in their forties, were arrested shortly after the incident, which stunned visitors and forced museum staff to cordon off the area.

Social media images showed a man wearing a "Just Stop Oil" T-shirt gluing his head to the glass protecting the canvas, while another glued his hand to the wall and a third emptied out a tin of what appeared to be tomato soup.

The climate activists said they had not intended to damage the painting, which Gosselink described as very vulnerable.

Just Stop Oil, which wants urgent action to stop global warming making the planet unlivable, explained on its website that it had begun using shock tactics targeting iconic works of art to make people think about what they considered precious and how to protect it.

"It enables a conversation," the coalition of anti-fossil fuel groups said.

"There's an apocalyptic, climate-driven famine in Somalia, which hasn't pushed me to say anything. But I'm venting my anger now over a work of art in a gallery. Does any of this add up? What do I really value here?"

The stunt at the Mauritshuis comes after activists threw soup at Vincent van Gogh's "Sunflowers" at the National Gallery in London on October 14 and smeared mashed potato over a Claude Monet painting in Germany. Both canvasses were protected by glass and were undamaged. — AFP

TRAVEL TALES

As Maine's winters shorten, tiny ticks threaten state's mighty moose



SHORTER WINTERS in Maine's woodlands have created a huge problem for the state's iconic moose, in the form of tiny blood-sucking ticks that thrive in warmer weather and which last year killed nearly 90% of Maine moose calves.

Now the northern New England state is studying a counter-intuitive solution to the climate-driven problem: can Maine help its moose population by allowing big game hunters to kill more rather than less of them each autumn?

"We've seen that areas with lower moose density tend to have healthier moose with fewer ticks," said state Moose Biologist Lee Kantar, who is running the study. "The ticks can't survive without a host."

Maine's messy dilemma reflects how climate change is transforming biospheres the world over by expanding the northward range of parasites. If Maine's effort to tackle its problem by increasing hunting works, it could provide a model for other regions facing similar problems.

At issue is the winter tick, a tiny creature that has flourished in Maine and other northern states and Canadian provinces as climate change provides it more time to find warm hosts to latch onto before the onset of frost that would otherwise kill it.

In Maine, the warming climate has shortened the winter by between one to two weeks compared to a century ago, according to Sean Birkel, the state climatologist and assistant professor at the University of Maine Climate Change Institute and Cooperative Extension. Those extra weeks of frost-free weather mean a moose meandering in the brush can acquire tens of thousands of more ticks on its coat than it would otherwise. And over a winter, those ticks will drain vast amounts of its blood at a time it is already contending with cold, deep snow, and low seasonal food supplies. Other woodland animals, like deer or snowshoe hare, are better than moose at removing the ticks by scratching or rubbing up against trees, leaving the moose - the largest

est creature in the local forest - to suffer the brunt of the tiny predator, said Kantar. "For whatever reason, moose are no good at getting rid of the ticks," he said.

"TOUGH SPOT"

An adult moose can generally survive the tick onslaught because of its size and strength. But younger moose suffer badly. In six of the past seven years, more than half of moose calves tracked by the state died before reaching a year old, said Kantar. And last year in northern Maine, 87% died.

"That's never been seen before," Kantar said.

Ticks can also weaken female moose to a point where they are unable to successfully reproduce, ideal moose population would be for Maine but he hopes the study will help answer that.

In the meantime, he said his office had received many public comments questioning the strategy and arguing shooting more moose defeats the purpose of trying to save them.

"It is counter-intuitive to increase the harvest. I understand that," Kantar said. "Unfortunately, we're in a tough spot because the only solution we see is this experimental reduction... That's not a happy answer for people." Each year, the Maine moose hunt draws around 50,000 applications in a lottery for the 2,000 to 3,000 moose permits typically issued. That can yield millions of dollars to the state in



he said.

Maine's moose population is currently the largest of all the lower 48 states at over 60,000 animals, according to state figures, thanks to an ideal habitat and careful management of the annual moose hunt. But the numbers have been declining, and the tick threat risks sending it downward sharply.

Kantar is now leading research to test whether thinning the moose population through increased hunting can help. That study involves expanding the hunt in one Maine region to see if there's evidence that moose surviving the hunters' guns there will end up with fewer ticks.

It is unclear, he said, what an

A WINDOW INTO CONTEMPORARY OMANI LITERATURE



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

My Village, Miskan, in Mourning

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

I remember that due to the force of the bullets, some pieces of our equipment had holes in them. The commander insisted that all of them should be carried down despite the fact they were too heavy. The regiment arrived the third day late in the evening. The late arrival was planned, so that our movements wouldn't come to the notice of the enemy. I remember amongst those who carried me were Srg. Mohammed al Hosni, Lance Corp. Yusof bin Khalfan al Busaidy (later brigadier general) and lance corp. Hamad bin Mane al Mamari (later brigadier general).

While on our way, I was asked to surrender my weapon. I strongly refused saying that if we were attacked I would be left alone, unable to move. Clutching my gun, I added that there wouldn't be any one to help me save Allah and my gun. This was in accordance with the military code I learnt during training; we were taught not to surrender our guns even if we were about to die.

We descended the mountain as the sun rose and arrived at its foot, where we found army vehicles waiting for us. It was then that I submitted my gun and ammunition, and wholeheartedly thanked all those who had helped me come through such a difficult time.

I and Saif al Kalbani, who had a hand injury, were the most severely injured. In the evening, the Beaver aircraft took us to Mosera Island, and thence to Thomas Hospital in Mutrah, where I was taken to the operating theatre.

Miskan was in mourning over the dead and the wounded*. Despite all that, the desire to join the army and participate in the Dhofar war didn't waver. On the contrary, it grew all the stronger. In the immediate aftermath of this incident, there were around forty people from Miskan and its outskirts who wanted to join. Bearing in mind that Miskan was just a small village, this number was remarkably large.

This was mainly due to their readiness and fitness as well as to the mountainous nature of their upbringing. Their readiness was such that one of my cousins, Srg. Hamad al Kalbani, would train them in his village, Sharjat alkes, every time he was on his annual leave.

* Amongst the martyrs were Mosabah bin Hamed bin Soliyam al Kalbani, Mohammed bin Saif bin Rashid al Kalbani, Said bin Naseeb bin Said al Kalbani, Mohammed bin Rahshid bin Hamad al Kalbani, may Allah have mercy on them. As for the wounded they were Corp. Said bin Rahshid bin Mohammed al Kalbani, Lieut. Col. Ali bin Rahshid bin Mohammed al Kalbani, Corp. Mohammed bin Ali bin Mohammed al Kalbani, Marhoon bin Soleman bin Khalaf al Kalbani, Saif bin Hamad bin Abdullah al Kalbani, Ali bin Salim bin Said al Kalbani, Mobarak bin Slam bin Mohammed al Kalbani and Saif bin Salim bin Abdullah al Kalbani (the author).

art & life

Local Scene

f t i y l p u @omanobserver

TUESDAY | NOVEMBER 1 | 2022

Lisu.. an iconic element of the Omani traditional dress

Mai al Abri

The Lisu (long scarf) has a rich cultural history in Omani society dating back hundreds of years, when women wore it as their shiny, elaborate head covering for all occasions. It served as a model for both aesthetic appeal and morality.

An exhibition titled "Lisu" featuring 47 colourful paintings that reflected Omani heritage was organised by a group of 26 Omani artists at Bait Al Zubair to highlight the historical significance of the scarf.

That smell of the mothers and grandmothers that we couldn't break away from is what always makes the "Lisu" special. The aroma of love and compassion they were able to radiate to everyone in their vicinity. The fragrance of the Lisu is entirely distinct from the modern day, common scents. Old Omani women used to mix their own special scents. The same smell covered every inch of the exhibition, transporting all of the visitors back to simpler times.

The colours of Lisu, is another tale. Back in times, the Omani women depended on colours to reveal their beauty. The scarf, though it was decent covering the head of the woman, yet, it gave a powerful source of elegance and beauty. It is only in recent years that Omani women were covered in black. The past was always full of colours.

The exhibition was inaugurated by artist Maryam al Zadjali, member of the State Council, who expressed her admiration for the idea and the presentation of "Lisu", saying, "I respect the level of thinking of these group of young artists. I love their focus on the old times with all the small details that they could cover in their paintings.



Omani (Lisu) constitutes one of the components of Omani fashion, and the distinctive feature is that Lisu has been employed by female artists in an innovative way and in various artistic schools, which reflects the depth of art and creativity."

"The idea emerged from the importance of the Omani heritage, to highlight the identity of (Lisu) as an identity for Omani women who have preserved, and still maintain, this heritage since ancient times," said Maryam.

"The idea was to preserve this heritage as a historical custom and an intellectual heritage that we inherited from our ancestors. The aim is to spread this identity to the world, and we, as artists, have to highlight this to the world in our own artistic way." The artist, Asia al Hasani, participated with a painting entitled "The Departure." The idea of the painting is the departure of "Lisu." She pointed out that the Lisu represents an ancient Omani heritage costume moving through time with generations with its bright colours. Women used to wear the Lisu to go out, whether for shopping or visits or other occasions, and with the recent development, the lisu has become limited to wearing in homes or family occasions.

Zahra al Ghatrifi participated with her painting from Al Aqr village in Nizwa. The picture conveys the warmth, tenderness, love, and tolerance common among neighbours, where the houses were next to each other and people exchanged food dishes.

The carpet includes some valuable pieces from Omani heritage to preserve it for future generations, because it will fade and disappear over time, just like old door and window decorations and clothing engravings." The exhibition runs until the end of November 2022 at Bait Al Zubair.