



50
GLORIOUS YEARS

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38°C/29°C

11TH SAILING ARABIA-THE TOUR FROM JAN 24
GO TO PAGE 12 SPORTS



► NEWS BRIEFS

HM THE SULTAN CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil on the occasion of his country's National Day.

In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere congratulations and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Bolsonaro and the friendly people of Brazil further progress and prosperity.

HM THE SULTAN CONDOLES CHAIRMAN OF SOVEREIGNTY COUNCIL IN SUDAN

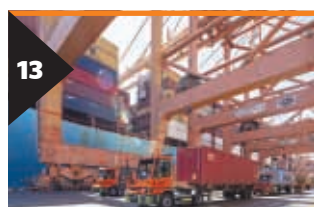
Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to Lt Gen Abdel Fattah al Burhan, Chairman of the Sovereignty Council in Sudan, for the victims of flooding that swept the country. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere condolences and sympathy to Lt Gen Burhan, families of the victims and the brotherly people of Sudan, praying to the Almighty Allah to rest their souls in peace and grant their families patience.

02



Oman ranked 84th in Global Innovation Index

13



Oman Container Line ranked among the best

COVID-19 restrictions reduced air pollution

Study on change in ambient air quality in Al Khuwayr, Mawaleh and Wattayah monitored pollutant gases and suspended particles

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Environment Agency (EA) in Oman, which recently conducted a study on the pollution levels as a result of the measures taken to limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, revealed that movement restrictions brought down air pollution in Muscat.

Technicians from EA, represented by the Directorate General of Environmental Affairs, conducted a study on change in

ambient air quality during movement restrictions in Al Khuwayr, Mawaleh and Wattayah.

'The results showed a significant decline in concentrations of pollutants during the pandemic following the decisions of the Supreme Committee to close the Muscat governorate, schools and commercial activities,' EA stated.

The study monitored the presence of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and suspended particles of 2.5-

Transportation alone contributes up to 23 per cent of global carbon emissions

10 micron diameter.

The authority said the Supreme Committee measures resulted in decline in traffic and noted that transportation alone contributes up to 23 per cent of

global carbon emissions, of which land transport constitutes 72 per cent and air transport 11 per cent of the total global emissions of greenhouse gases.

The study also noted that there's little hope for future reduction in pollution based on the restrictive measures, as they are not permanent. 'Rather, efforts must be intensified on programmes and projects that work to reduce pollution rates of all kinds and preserve the sultanate's natural resources.'



Volunteers build new homes for needy in Yanqul

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To achieve social solidarity and spread love among members of society, over 200 volunteers have come together to build 20 houses for needy families in the wilayat of Yanqul in Dhahirah governorate.

Yanqul Charity Team launched the initiative in August to help needy families live in the comfort of modern houses. The group, comprising 212 volunteers, is tirelessly working under a campaign called 'Ma'awa' (A home).

The group operates under the umbrella of the Social Development Committee in the Ministry of Social Development in Yanqul, informed Suad Abdullah al Alawi, head of the team.

"We started our activities in 2011 and the new campaign was launched in August this year."

She said that the current campaign aims to improve the standard of life of needy families.

"We are cooperating with the Zakat Committee of the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs. We have collected RO20,000 to build about 20 housing units. We help families whose monthly income does not exceed RO400."

The campaign will benefit families that haven't obtained a housing loan from any government agency, Suad said. "We fol-

We help insolvent families to become productive. We sponsor about 70 orphans and have maintained and restored more than 70 homes

Suad Abdullah al Alawi

low certain specifications suiting the Omani environment when building or renovating a house."

Suad said it hasn't been easy to raise finances for the campaign because of the overall economic situation. "Some individuals and private sector companies have come forward to help us as they understand it's a worthy cause."

Talking about the team's work, she said, "We help insolvent families to become productive. We sponsor about 70 orphans and have maintained and restored more than 70 homes."

The team is now planning a centre to help families sell their products. "We also hope to establish a headquarter for us. We thank all people and private sector companies that support us."

The team can be contacted on 94969333 and 25685631.

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84th in Global Innovation Index

OMAN PERFORMS BEST IN INDICATORS OF HUMAN CAPITAL AND RESEARCH AND IS NO 1 IN THE CRITERIA OF GRADUATES IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman has fallen by four places to 84th rank among 131 economies featured in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2020. Switzerland, Sweden, US, UK and Netherlands lead the innovation ranking, followed by Denmark, Finland, Singapore, Germany and Republic of Korea making the top ten.

GII ranks world economies according to their innovation capabilities. Consisting of roughly 80 indicators, grouped into innovation inputs and outputs, the GIi aims to capture the multi-dimensional facets of innovation.

The rankings of Oman over the past three years has fallen, from 69 in 2018 to 80 in 2019 and 84 in 2020. Oman performs better in innovation inputs than innovation outputs in 2020, although this year the sultanate ranks 68th in innovation inputs, lower than last year and lower compared to 2018. As for innovation outputs, Oman ranks 109th. This position is lower than last year and lower compared to 2018.

Compared to other economies in Northern Africa and Western Asia, Oman performs above average in three out of the seven GIi criteria - Insti-

Compared to other economies in Northern Africa and Western Asia, Oman performs above average in three out of the seven GIi criteria - Institutions, Human capital and research, and Infrastructure

tutions, Human capital and research, and Infrastructure - and below average in four of the remaining - Market sophistication, Business sophistication, Knowledge and technology outputs, and Creative outputs.

Oman performs best in Human capital and research and its weakest performance is in Knowledge and technology outputs.

The sultanate does exceptionally well in education and is ranked 24th. It is number one in Graduates in science and engineering, 12th in Tertiary education, 36th for Pupil-teacher ratio (secondary school) and 37th for ICT access.

On the business front, Oman is ranked 30th in Ease of starting a business, General infrastructure - 29th, State of cluster development - 27th, and FDI net inflows (per cent GDP) - 24th.

The GIi is co-published by Cornell University, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), a specialized agency of the United Nations. In 2020, the GIi presents its 13th edition devoted to the theme 'Who Will Finance Innovation?'

"The rapid, worldwide spread of the coronavirus requires fresh thinking to ensure a shared victory over this quintessential global challenge," said Francis Gurry, director general of WIPO. "Even as we all grapple with the immediate human and economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments need to ensure that rescue packages are future oriented and support the individuals, research institutes, companies and others with innovative and collaborative new ideas for the post-COVID era. Innovations equal solutions."

OMAN GIi RANKINGS IN THE LAST THREE YEARS

YEAR	RANKINGS GIi	INNOVATION INPUTS	INNOVATION OUTPUTS
2020	84	68	109
2019	80	57	101
2018	69	57	75



OVERVIEW OF OMAN RANKINGS IN SEVEN GIi CRITERIA

Oman performs best in Human Capital and Research and its weakest performance is in Knowledge & Technology Outputs.

(*The highest possible ranking in each criterion is 1)

43

Human
Capital and
Research

94

Creative Outputs

104

Market
Sophistication

56

Infrastructure

95

Business
Sophistication

124

Knowledge
and
Technology
Outputs

70

Institutions

STRENGTHS (RANK)

INDICATOR NAME

30

Ease of starting a
business

37

ICT access

24

Education

29

General
infrastructure

6

Government
funding/pupil,
secondary, %
GDP/cap

23

Electricity
output,
GWh/mn pop

36

Pupil-teacher
ratio, secondary

21

Gross capital
formation, %
GDP

12

Tertiary
education

38

University/
industry
research
collaboration

1

Graduates in
science &
engineering

27

State of cluster
development

24

FDI net inflows,
% GDP

38

Trademarks by
origin/bn PPPS
GDP

Civil Aviation announces guidelines for drones

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has issued a number of regulations regarding operating drones in Oman.

The authority stated that drones should be used only for special purposes or services which include photography, aerial surveying, spraying (pesticides), transportation of equipment and materials, or search and rescue operations.

The authority confirmed that licences will be issued for a period of one year and it is renewable, and it may not be waived except after a written approval from the authority. The age limit for applying for a licence is 18 years. The drone should be insured for civil liability for the benefit of others throughout the licence period.

'Licence holders must adhere to some conditions that prohibit photographing private places, flying over them, violating privacy, and operating drones within 5km of airports, ports and protected places, and any other



(Supplied photo)

Licence holders must adhere to some conditions that prohibit photographing private places, flying over them, violating privacy, and operating drones within 5km of airports, ports and protected places and any other site specified by the authority

site specified by the authority,' CAA stated.

The authority also said that drones should not carry any weapons, equipment or materials that pose a threat to public safety, or the safety of individuals and their property.

Operating drones is also prohibited during the passage of official convoys.



(Supplied photo)

Stranded passengers return to sultanate

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Nearly 3,500 Indian residents of Oman who had got stuck in their home country came back to the sultanate in the last few months.

They - individuals and families - were stranded due to the sudden closure of airports following the coronavirus pandemic outbreak. The Embassy of India in Muscat made every effort to facilitate their safe return.

An official from the Indian Embassy said, "Almost 3,500 Indians came back to Oman in the last five months. They came from every state, the majority from Kerala. We are working with respective officials and authorities for the return of the others."

There are also some independent volunteer groups that have been working to help people return to Oman.

By helping process papers, providing information and put-

ting people through to the right authorities, these groups have been bringing back several residents from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Venisha Anil Sampat, who came back to Oman recently, said, "I was stuck in India for several months. I and my mother were struggling to come back to Oman. Nothing was working for us, but suddenly we saw a ray of hope through the group called 'Umeed Ek Koshish'. It's a group of volunteers who guide people to come back and join their loved ones." He said Umeed volunteers understood the feelings of the people at a tough time and worked without any vested interests to help them.

There are a few Omanis also who got stuck in India but managed to come back with the assistance of volunteer groups.

Shahnaz Begam Bir Mohammed Ghafour, in her fifties, was in Nasik for medical treatment. Her return ticket got can-

celled in March and she was stuck there. She was fortunate to have relatives there, but being under treatment, she was desperate to be back.

Shahnaz's son Mohammad Abdullal Mohammad, said, "We are from Musandam and it is easy for us to go through the UAE owing to the short distance and time. My mother went to India in October last year and could not come back by March. I am the only son with four sisters and we were all tensed for her."

He said initially he didn't want his mother to come through Muscat. "That would mean a longer duration travelling and with her operation I was sceptical to take that risk."

"I waited for the UAE airports to open but when I saw that it is taking long, I finally brought her via Muscat with the help of Rashmi Sahay and her team (another volunteer group). She came back last week and our joy knew no bounds when we saw her."

692 new COVID-19 cases, 23 deaths reported

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Sunday confirmed 692 new cases of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), taking the total to 87,072. The number of deaths

reported in the last three days was 23.

'The number of recoveries has increased to 82,406 while the number of deaths has reached 728,' an MoH statement said.

As of Sunday, a total of 447 patients were admitted in health

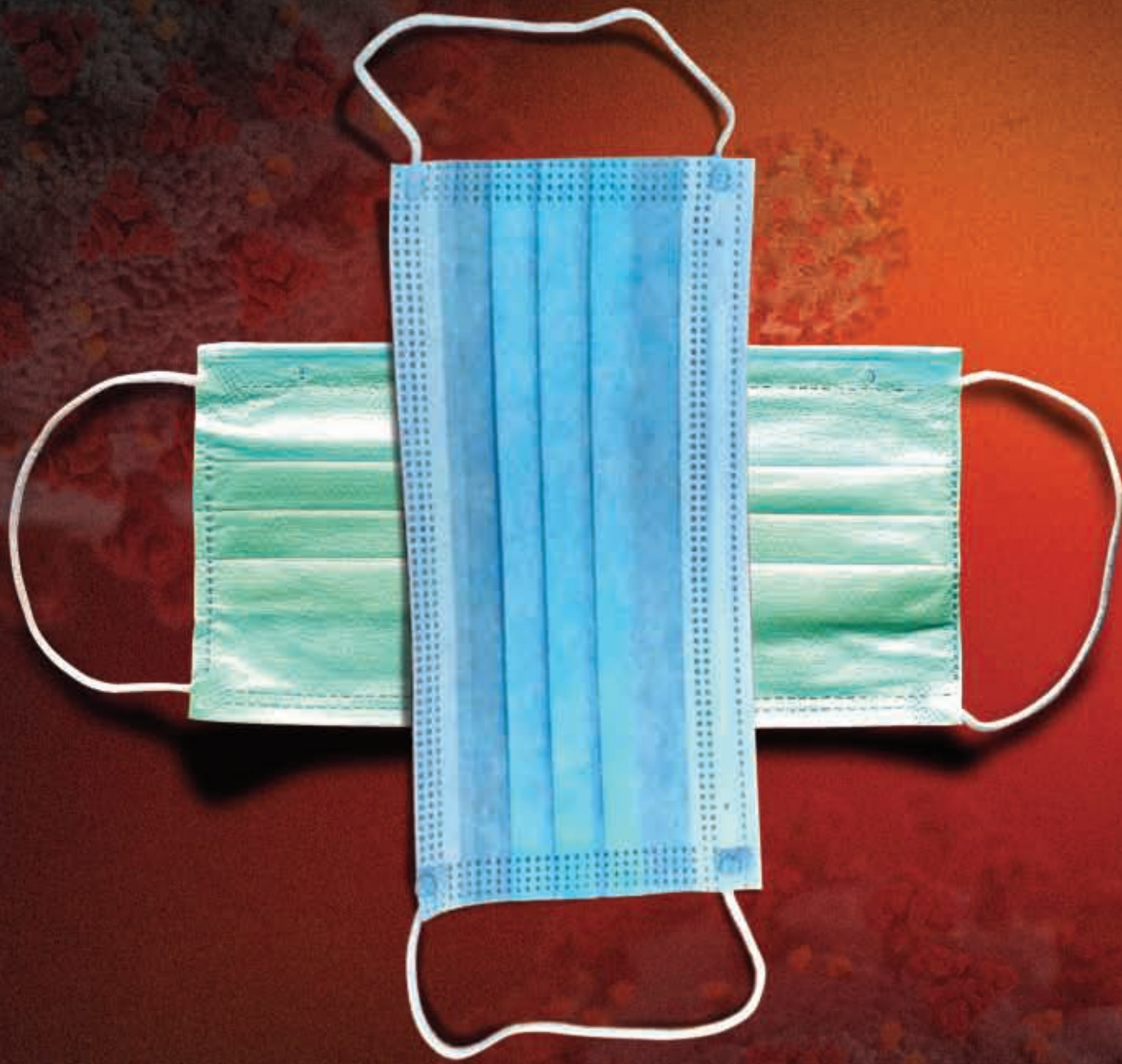
institutions while 155 patients were in ICU.

MoH calls upon all to adhere to the isolation procedures by staying in an isolated room with an attached toilet and serving the isolated person from outside the room as instructed. It said that

social distancing also helps curb the spread of the virus. MoH advises all citizens and residents to continue washing hands with water and soap, avoiding touching the face, nose, mouth and eyes and following healthy habits when coughing and sneezing.

CURB COVID-19

MAKE POSITIVE DECISIONS



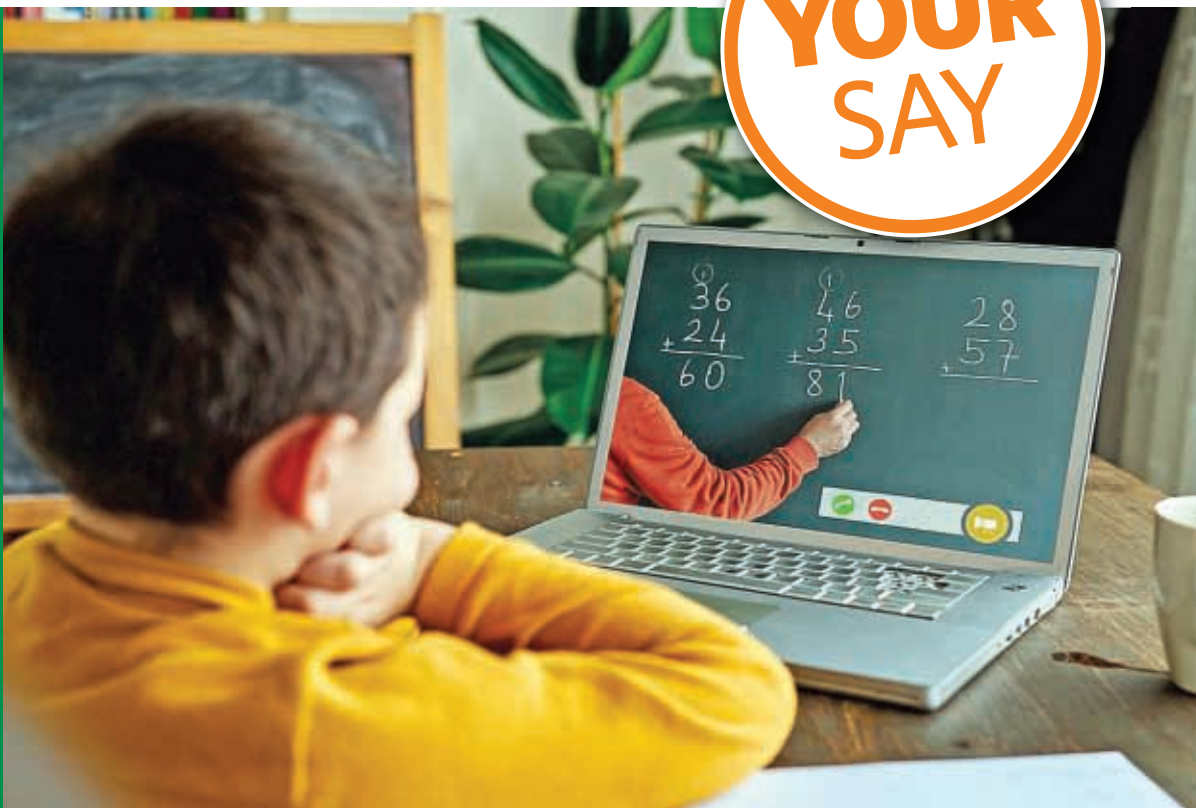
STAY HEALTHY STAY SAFE

YOUR SAY

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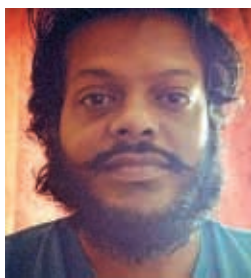


THE NEW NORM

With schools either closed or providing education online, are you worried that children are missing out on the school atmosphere and learning social skills?

Prashant Upadhyaya
Marketing specialist

Yes, it is of grave concern since children need to mingle for overall development including social, psychological and physical development. Moreover, online classes are making children either addicted to mobiles/computers or repulsed by studies altogether.



M D Afzaluddin
Physiotherapist

Yes, indeed the quality of education and competitiveness will definitely be missing without attending school. Children will also be lacking gross motor skills and social skills in such an environment.



Shagufta binth Hasham
Nursery school director

I am an early childhood educator and I feel children up to the age of eight are facing major challenges coping with online schooling. It is playing havoc with their psychology and their socio emotional development. They need personal interaction with peers and teachers.



Dr Zainab Ansari
Investor

Social skills are very important for children of all ages. It lets them play a role in various ways within a particular environment and situation. But right now, safety is the priority. Social skills can be learnt anytime but health shouldn't be compromised at all.



Piyush Bhavsar
Design engineer

Yes, students will miss academics and more. Online study is a temporary solution and not a preferred method for younger children. They will be handicapped as there isn't much writing practice in online study, besides the absence of direct supervision.



C A Mayank Palgauta
Finance manager

I do not worry about missing the school atmosphere when our child is taking online classes. Health is wealth. COVID-19 is not going to stay forever. So, once everything is okay when there is a vaccine, our child will adapt to the school environment and learn social skills. Till then, online is the new normal.



Mohan Anandan
Banker

We must admit that COVID-19 has completely re-written the rulebooks of all kinds of social norms and practices and we are forced to embrace what is called 'the new norm' today. Children too have learnt to adapt to the new atmosphere and in the process, they have learnt new skills and techniques in networking and also more avenues for studying online.



Shajna Koloth
Teacher

In this technoholic world, a child can learn anything or everything from the device in front of them but they can't earn the memories - shared tiffins, classroom giggles... and most importantly, they are missing an atmosphere where they can share any question about life. School is nothing but an encyclopedia of life. The poor children are missing the stepping stones towards their unending sky.



Suleiman al Difai
Finance professional

Yes, I am worried. Children learning through online resources don't get the best interaction or acquire the best skills. It is vital for children to be in physical classrooms to learn social networking and face-to-face dialogue.



Muthumari Pandian
Homemaker

Yes, obviously, the school environment plays an important role in helping children develop emotional and social skills. It's instrumental in shaping one's personality and the way one deals with situations in life. The school experience also makes them better human beings, fit for a healthy society. The current situation has created stress and a stagnant condition for the mind.



Seeb fish market 58% complete; production rises



Our Correspondent
Muscat

To upgrade the fisheries sector in the sultanate, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MoAFWR) is developing markets across Oman.

Currently, the Seeb fish market in Muscat is being developed at a cost of RO1,750,000. The project is 58 per cent complete, the ministry stated.

An official at the ministry said that the project aims to upgrade fish markets and provide a suitable environment for the sale and purchase of fish.

The market in Seeb includes a hall for displaying fish and another large open hall with 64 tables for retail sale, besides 44

tables for cutting fish. The market also includes a number of facilities and shops to serve the market visitors including consumers, sellers and tourists.

Meanwhile, the ministry confirmed that the sultanate's fish production increased by 34 per cent during the first half of 2020 compared to the same period of 2019.

From January to July 2020, Oman's total fish production was up by 34 per cent to 372,000 tonnes valued at RO161mn compared to the same period of last year, according to statistics of the ministry.

The ministry said the quantity of fish exports reached 138,000 tonnes and was valued at RO58mn.

Actor's death shocks Indian community

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Indian diaspora in Oman is in a state of shock following news of the death of popular Indian graphic designer, stage actor and signboard artist, Unni Krishnan.

The 50 year old was found dead on Saturday afternoon in his flat on Honda Road, Ruwi.

Krishnan was known to be a spontaneous and free-spirited man. The cause of his death is still unknown and investigations are on.

PM Jabir, community welfare secretary of Indian Social Club, said, "I have known Unni for more than ten years and he was very active in the cultural scene in Oman. I am shocked by his sudden demise."

Krishnan acted in the Malay-



Unni Krishnan

alam film *Life is Beautiful*, released a few months ago. He acted as Sajeevan, who opposed suicide.

Prakash Nair, director of the film, said, "Unni was a man full of positive energy. He was very cooperative and friendly. I was very happy to have him in my short film and his performance in it. Ironically, the name Sajeevan means 'a man full of life'."

Steps are being taken to repatriate the body, Jabir said.

? NEXT ON YOUR SAY

Are you concerned that some people are ignoring COVID-19 preventive measures such as wearing face masks properly and maintaining social distancing?

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

REGIONAL WEATHER

	Max	Min
Abu Dhabi	40	27
Doha	39	28
Kuwait City	42	31
Manama	38	29
Riyadh	40	24

PRAYER TIMINGS

Fajr	4.34am
Sunrise	5.51am
Duhr	12.10pm
Asr	3.37pm
Maghrib	6.24pm
Isha	7.35pm

Topfruit

NO ADDED SUGAR





Sultanate's loggerhead turtle population sinking

Study highlights need for urgent conservation actions

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A 30-year study of Oman's loggerhead turtles has highlighted the need for urgent additional conservation actions. The study has also discovered a 79 per cent decline in nesting population on the Masirah Island.

Various collaborative partners including the Environment Society of Oman (ESO), Environment Authority in Oman (former Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs), United States Fish and Wildlife Service, United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - National Marine Fisheries Service, and Five Oceans Environmental Services, announced the publication of the scientific paper, a major milestone in an extensive study of Oman's loggerhead turtle populations.

Conducted over a period of 30 years, the study evaluated the long-term population trend and management priorities of the globally-important loggerhead population nesting on Masirah Island. Its most significant discovery was a 79 per cent decline in the nesting population on the island, which has historically been one of the largest nesting grounds of loggerhead turtles in the world.

"Although no trend analysis was completed for the other marine turtle species in Oman, we assume they are also at risk of decline, being exposed to the same threats from land- and sea-based disturbances, yet there is still hope," Suaad al Harthi, ESO's executive director, said.

"We must continue, as a community, to raise awareness, to carry out our outreach activities, and to advocate for the protection

management and conservation measures, along with strong co-operation with all concerned authorities and the involvement of the local community, that we can be successful in conserving our natural resources, and ensure that they are still around for future generations."

She added, "The authority has a long history in turtle conservation and has a network of rangers dedicated to their protection at

urges everyone to redouble their efforts to save this globally important population of turtles."

"Oman is home to five of the seven species of turtles found in the world, all of which are endangered to various degrees on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and face high risk of extinction in the wild," added Andrew Willson, senior marine consultant at Five Oceans Environmental Services.

"A variety of disturbances like coastal development, light pollution and beach driving, accidental capture in fishing nets (bycatch), ghost fishing, plastic pollution and climate change, all impact both the habitat and population numbers. Through our research, monitoring and satellite tracking, we are starting to build up a better idea of how the loggerheads from Masirah are being affected and this will help the authorities to develop plans for protected areas and strategic conservation management action moving forward."

The scientific paper is published in the journal *Frontiers in Marine Science* and can be accessed through the link <https://tinyurl.com/y3x26l79>

ESO has spent the last 16 years working to protect Oman's environment through education, awareness and conservation.

Forum to promote wildlife conservation

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To promote wildlife reserves, the Office for Conservation of the Environment at the Diwan of Royal Court will organise the first Scientific Forum in the Al Wusta Wildlife Reserve from September 17-19.

Speaking to *Muscat Daily*, Dr Qais al Rawahi, director, Al Wusta Wildlife Reserve, said, "The forum's programme will include scientific lectures, practical workshops and field visits to breeding centres in the Al Wusta Wildlife Reserve."

The forum targets citizens and residents in Oman while its main aim is to exchange experiences among veterinarians.

The forum aims to share knowledge about the methods of breeding wild animals in the reserve and help the participants get acquainted with the project of bringing Arabian oryx from the US.

It will also educate them on the diseases that affect animals, methods of treatment and the project of catching Nubian ibex and installing collars on these.

Veterinarians will make several day and night tours inside the reserve to identify more than 11 species of wild animals including Arabian oryx, Arabian gazelle, Rhim gazelle, Nubian ibex, red fox, ostrich and brown eagle.

The night tour will include observing and counting animals such as the wild rabbit.

The reserve will provide the participating veterinarians with a place to sleep, and also allow camping.

"In the future, we are planning to hold more events to attract people. We want to promote the reserve and also spread the culture of wildlife conservation among members of the community," added Dr Rawahi.

Veterinarians can register for the forum via <https://forms.gle/EwurY4481eGUmXdXA>

Meanwhile, the Office for



(Supplied photos)



Conservation of the Environment recently launched a programme to release wild animals (Arabian antelopes) into the wild, setting them free in the Al Wusta Wildlife Reserve.

Following their release, the antelopes were traced through satellite and radio devices.

The move came in the wake of a success story that began with a project for the settlement and breeding of the Arabian oryx in

the 1970s.

The second phase of the project for the settlement of Arabian oryx was implemented by a decision of the late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said in the 1980s.

The third phase of the programme was launched in March 2020, which saw the release of Arabian oryx, Arabian gazelle and Rhim gazelle into the wildlife reserve.

ROP NEWS



Traffickers arrested with cigarettes, chewing tobacco

Muscat - Four expatriates have been arrested for possession of cigarettes and chewing tobacco, the Royal Oman Police (ROP) has announced.

In the first case, Dakhliyah Governorate Police Command arrested two persons of Asian nationality on charges of possessing cigarettes and chewing tobacco with the intention of trafficking these. More than 540 packs of cigarettes and more than 170 bags of chewing to-

bacco were seized from their possession.

In the second case, officials said that Lima Police Station, led by the Musandam Governorate Police, arrested two persons of Asian nationality on charges of smuggling chewing tobacco. They were in possession of 50 boxes and bags of various types of chewing tobacco.

Officials said that the accused have been referred to the judicial authorities for further investigation.



شركة النماء للدواجن ش م ع م A' Namaa Poultry Co. S.A.O.C

Extension announcement TENDERS FOR LEASING TRUCKS (long term contract)

A' Namaa Poultry Company SAOC invites all companies dealing in leasing trucks and wishing to participate in the tender for leasing trucks, to apply to the company to purchase the tender and the details are as follows: -

SR	Tenders Details	Tender No	No of trucks
1	Distribution Trucks (Refrigerated)	ANP/LD/010/2020	37
2	Prime Mover	ANP/LD/020/2020	16

- Obtaining the conditions of the tender from the Procurement Committee at the company's headquarters at the following address: Al Nahda Towers 2, Floor 7, Office No. 9, during working hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., before 10th Sept2020 for a fee of OMR 100. which is non-refundable for each tender.
- Submitting bids in sealed envelope with the tender numbers and name written on it.
- Attach the offers with the commercial registration details of the applicant.

The last date for receiving applications is September 14, 2020.

A' Namaa Poultry reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers without giving any reasons.

Suppliers will be notified after the screening process according to the company's standards.

In case of any queries or further clarification on the process, please contact Logistics Department (Phone: +968 22504469; Email: info@anamaa.com) during office hours

Bank Muscat to mark Women's Day with special draw

Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the sultanate, in step with its vision 'To serve you better, everyday' and commitment to partnership in encouraging a savings culture in Oman, will reward 50 Zeinah women customers at a special Al Mazyona prize draw to celebrate the Omani Women's Day on October 17.

The winners will win RO2,000 each during the special draw that is to be held on the occasion, with a total of RO100,000 to be given away. This special draw is being held by the bank in recognition of the goals and aspirations of different segments of its customers.

The Omani Women's Day celebrates the important role that Omani women play in nation-building. All Zeinah customers who maintain an average monthly balance of RO1,000 will be entered into the draw. Customers can win more by saving more with Bank Muscat since their chances of winning goes up proportionally with higher deposit balances and the longer they save with the bank.

This flexible scheme makes regular saving an easy habit to practice and is available for all customers of Bank Muscat, which has the largest network of



branches in Oman.

Abdullah Tamman al Mashaani, deputy general manager - Institutional Sales and Product Development, said, "The special draw on the occasion of the Omani Women's Day cele-

brates the very important role that Omani women are playing in the Renaissance of Oman. For example, the number of women employees at Bank Muscat itself has reached more than 48 per cent of all employees across all departments.

"The bank's women employees have excelled in their jobs and today occupy positions at all levels of seniority including the Management Team. The bank would like to encourage all our women customers to celebrate this important occasion with us and also to save more so as to be prepared for changing circum-

stances in their lives."

He added that Al Mazyona has allocated many prizes in the Zeinah category so as to encourage Omani women to save more and to stand by them in supporting their aspirations.

The Zeinah suite of products and services is based on the premise that women prefer to use special banking services that enhance their privacy. Catering to the unique needs, Zeinah ensures privacy and a relaxed atmosphere for women customers at Bank Muscat branches. The unique products available for women include Zeinah Debit card, tailored merchant discounts and a health and beauty finance scheme.

The 2020 Al Mazyona scheme is designed to transform the lives of prudent savers. The scheme is targeted to accommodate all segments, including ladies, youth, children, high savings balance customers and salary account holders, thereby inculcating a strong savings habit among citizens who will be responsible for the future development of Oman.

Prizes given away will include high value prizes to the Asalah and Al Jawhar segments as well as winners from different governorates of the country.

Omantel launches DOB service with beIN Media Group

Omantel, the leading digital service provider in Oman, announced the launch of Direct Operator Billing (DOB) service in partnership with beIN Media Group, the leading sports, media and entertainment group.

The DOB service allows Omantel customers to easily and securely subscribe to beIN Connect via their mobile bill to enjoy exclusive world class content on their smart devices wherever they are.

Omantel's partnership with beIN Media Group comes under the umbrella of the company's strategy that closely focuses on enriching its digital partnerships ecosystem. This strategy aims at expanding the portfolio of innovative services and solutions that Omantel offers to meet the needs and expectations of its customers, while offering them added value on both personal and professional levels.

Omantel customers can now subscribe to beIN Connect via the Direct Operator Billing service, where they can enjoy easy and secure daily, monthly, or yearly subscription plans without the need to use bank cards. The subscription fee would simply be added to the customer's bill in Baqati postpaid or deducted from the customer's balance in Hayyak prepaid.

The company is keen on offering a selection of flexible options to suit its customers' unique needs and expectations. To sub-



scribe, customers can visit <https://www.foot.om.omantel.om>.

beIN Connect features exclusive and comprehensive access to sporting competitions including the UEFA Champions League, English Premier League, LaLiga, Serie A, Ligue 1, NBA and so much more.

beIN Connect also offers subscribers exclusive access to cookery channels such as the famous beIN Gourmet and kid's channels JeemTV, Baraem and beJunior.

The service features 1080p Full HD with Dolby Audio, presenting content in vivid quality and in rich, clear and powerful sound. beIN Connect supports the most popular smart devices and operating systems for a chance to enjoy content anytime anywhere.

By signing such digital partnerships, Omantel seeks to meet its customers' needs and expec-

tations through the offering of the latest innovative services and technologies.

The company is always keen on offering the most advanced tools to enhance its customers' experience and offer them an unmatched telecommunications experience on its largest network in Oman.

Omantel's strategy is centered around digital transformation leadership and empowering the community to enjoy a smarter portable lifestyle, as well as using advanced technology to enable an easier and more flexible life.

The company places itself as an active partner in creating the future of smart life in Oman.

The DOB service is enabled by Zain API and Digital Virgo, the France-based specialist in telecom payments, monetization and digital marketing and one of beIN payment partners in the region.

Immuno: Fortified drinking water from Oman Oasis

Oman Oasis has always been recognised as the most preferred bottled water brand in the sultanate due to its uncompromising commitment to safety and high-quality of bottled water. It has recently introduced a new product to its line called 'Immuno'. Fortified with Zinc and Copper, Immuno is specially formulated to boost the immune system.

"Staying hydrated, healthy, and working towards enhancing overall immunity is essential,"



said N Janardhan, chief operating officer, The Zubair Corporation.

"Immuno is the first-of-its-kind and only drinking water in the region that has the added benefits of Zinc and Copper nutrients, therefore, differentiating itself from other packaged water."

According to WHO advisory, 'Zinc plays a central role in supporting immune system. Furthermore, it helps to prevent respiratory infections, boost

growth in children and enhance sensory functions. Copper plays major role as a catalyst for multiple enzymes, anti-oxidant function, cardio vascular health and brain development. Moreover, it helps in bone health, increase WBC & RBC counts in blood, effective iron utilization, preventing and treating anemia. Zinc and Copper are very much essential during pregnancy and lactation period'.

Immuno water contributes 50

per cent of the recommended dietary values of Zinc and 75 per cent of Copper, keeping an average of 2-litre consumption per day. The composition levels are based on RDA (Recommended Dietary Allowance) values recommended by national and international food standards.

"Oman Oasis has always prided itself on being an organization that believes in giving back to the community. Therefore, we constantly strive to bring

out products that can enhance individuals' health," said NSS Subramanian, group general manager, Oman Oasis.

"Boosting immunity helps protect us and those around us. Along with following the general health protocols, daily consumption of Immuno water, which has the added benefits of essential nutrients like Zinc and Copper, will go a long way in helping us build a stronger, healthier, and safer future."

Immuno comes uniquely designed in a bold glowing blue bottle, illustrating the advantage of rich nutrient contents that helps in building immunity to its consumer. Immuno is available in convenient packages of 500ml and 1.5lt to suit the varying preferences of consumers.

With over 26 years of dedicated service to customers, Oman Oasis is the most preferred brand amongst consumers in Oman.

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Shihab picked for coaching scholarship

International coach and lecturer Shihab Al-Din al Riyami from Oman Volleyball Federation got the International Coaches Scholarship offered by International Olympic Solidarity in cooperation with the International Support Program to the African and Caribbean Sport (PAISAC).

The grant includes 3 phases. The first phase will be from September 20 to November 8 and will be held 'remotely'.

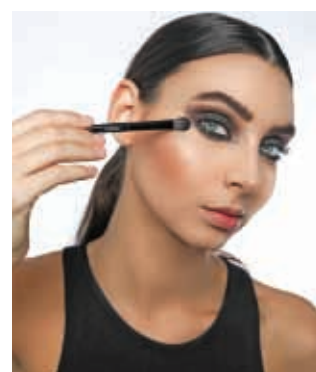
The second phase will also be held remotely during the period November 2020-April 2021, and the third and final phase in Canada during from May 3-28, 2021.

Odists make-up brushes launched in the Middle East

Get ready to take your make-up skills to new heights. Odists, an ethical and climate-conscious beauty brand, launched a collection consisting of ten premium make-up brushes. The clean, minimalist and luxurious make-up brushes include five face and five eye brushes all made from three high-performing vegan hair types, each engineered to work with specific textures and formulas.

Unapologetic and opinionated, Odists was born with a mission to create great products but also to challenge trends, empower and inspire. Offering new perspectives, Odists believes in building a beauty community that raises topics that matter in the region. Odists embodies the new form of luxury; positive luxury.

Odists is authentic, unpolished and relatable. Offering a variety of ten brushes, the collection includes all the essential make-up tools for the face and eyes allowing for beautiful application of any make-up product. The design-led brushes are vegan, cruelty-free, responsibly sourced and come in modern and mini-



mal premium packaging.

Starting from AED75, the brushes are available on <http://www.odists.com>. Or treat yourself and your loved one to The Essential Ten, a complete set of all ten brushes including a faux leather pouch for AED795.

"I always had a strong love for creative, alternative beauty. I spent a lot of time researching products and sharing my knowledge but equally I felt that something was missing. As I was looking for quality, off-beat, innovative products with responsible values, I couldn't help but miss that personal connection with the brand. This is why I decided that it was time to build my own. Odists is different from other brands because we believe

beauty lies within the brand's ability to connect with the consumer on a deeper level. Now, more than ever, new-age consumers are educated, well-informed and seek genuine connections with brands and expect a quality product," says Amy Hanbury, founder of Odists.

The collection is made of five face and five eye brushes made of Body, Silk and Razor Fibre. Each brush is luxuriously soft to the touch and kind to the skin to help achieve gorgeous and radiant looking skin.

All the brushes have a number of different uses and are designed for different application purposes.

From the perfect base to exceptional camouflage and sheer blush application, the five facial brushes in the collection contain all the professional tools needed to achieve a flawless complexion.

The eye brushes are specifically designed for applying all types of make-up to create the perfect look, from the simplest to the more sophisticated. The brushes include the 025 crease blender for applying or blending any kind of eyeshadow.

AJIA announces the arrival of all-new BMW 5 Series in Oman

Al Jenaibi International Automobiles LLC (AJIA), the official importer of BMW Group in Oman, introduces the newest BMW 5 Series to the sultanate.

The vehicle boasts a heightened sense of outward authority, an interior brimming with detailed refinements and a host of efficiency-enhancing features, reinforcing its position at the premium end of the executive class.

The exterior is defined by eye-catching design accents, clearly structured surfaces at the front and rear, and a newly redesigned BMW kidney grille. Additionally, the vehicle's LED headlights incorporate slimmer contours, a three-dimensional sculpted rear light and trapezoidal exhaust tailpipe finishers.

The model flaunts the M Sport package with new muscular design features and model-specific accents, as well as the new light-alloy wheels in 18-to 20-inch formats. The option to upgrade to the 20-inch BMW Individual Air Performance Wheels is also available for the first time.

The BMW 5 Series' interior details have been slightly refined. Controls on the centre console are now finished in High-Gloss Black, and the interior trim strips have been updated. Adding style and comfort, the new Sensatec perforated trim variant for the seat surfaces and M multifunction seats subtly enhance the model.

Known for its state-of-the-art technology, the newest BMW 5 Series comes with an optional 12.3-inch Control Display (10.25-inch Control Display now stan-



dard), automatic climate control with extended features and a sports leather steering wheel with newly arranged multifunction buttons.

Paving the way for automated driving, the Driver Assistance

system, optional Parking Assistant, and extended functions assist with important, but monotonous tasks and enables automated driving in situations such as traffic jams or on long journeys.

The BMW Maps feature, a cloud-based navigation system offering extremely fast and precise calculation of routes and arrival times, is now integrated into the model's technology for the first time ever. Under the hood,

the model is further developed by BMW's TwinPower Turbo technology making it the ultimate driving machine.

Salim Sabbagh, acting chief executive officer of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles said,

"We are thrilled for the arrival of the all-new BMW 5 Series. With its hallmark of style, innovative engineering, and luxury advancements, the vehicle is sure to satisfy the needs of our existing and prospective customers."

"The model sets many firsts in the premium executive class, with a myriad of exclusive features and updates in both the exterior and interior design."

For more information please visit bmw-oman.com.



BankDhofar ensures convenient banking with 'Drive-Thru'

BankDhofar ensures utmost convenient banking experience for customers through its Drive-Thru Banking services. The first-of-its-kind service in the sultanate enables customers to conduct a number of transactions without stepping out of their car.

With the Drive-Thru Banking services, BankDhofar customers may conduct various transactions from their cars including cash deposit and withdrawal, cheque deposit, instant debit card issuance, bank transfers, and request for account statements.

The service is now available in Seeb branch-Seeb Plaza, and the bank is planning to expand the service across the sultanate.

BankDhofar strives to provide top-of-the-line experience to its customers, by making banking easy.

As one of the fastest growing financial services institution in the sultanate, BankDhofar sets the standard for best customer experience within the banking industry in the sultanate through innovative products and creative solutions, which are designed to meet the diverse needs of consumers. BankDhofar customers can access the financial services through a wide network of branches, ATMs and CDMs around the sultanate.

For added customer convenience, bank offers smart banking at the fingertips through its Mo-

bile Banking App. Customers may conduct a wide range of instant mobile banking services through the award winning app. The services include instant transfer 24/7 to any to any local bank account, cardless cash, mobile top-up for all telecom providers in the sultanate, increasing daily withdrawal limit to RO5,000, among other services.

To learn more check out BankDhofar pages on social media; Facebook (www.facebook.com/BankDhofar), Twitter (@BankDhofar), Instagram (www.instagram.com/BankDhofar), or visit the official website www.BankDhofar.com or contact the call centre 24/7 on (+968) 24791111 for inquiries.

Ooredoo gives RO30 off on devices

Giving customers even more for less, Ooredoo is offering an extra RO30 discount to Shahry customers, with every new device bought through the eShop. While stocks last, customers can choose from the best smartphones on the market, and get all the benefits of Ooredoo's value-packed postpaid plans.

Making it even more budget-friendly, the telecoms company is currently offering up to 50 per cent off on selected flagship smartphones, including iPhone, Samsung and Huawei devices. Available only through the eShop, there's no better time to get hold of the latest smartphone along with lots of data, unlimited



calls and no contract, all from the comfort of home.

Feras bin Abdullah al Shaikh, director of Branding and Communications at Ooredoo, said,

"At Ooredoo we're always trying to find more ways for our customers to get the phones they want with the plans that suit their needs and their pockets. Our newest offer means customers on all budgets have the chance to get hold of best-in-the-market smartphones quickly and easily. It's all part of our commitment to enriching our customers digital lives and making sure they can enjoy the internet to the max."

The postpaid Device Bonanza is a gateway to Ooredoo's popular Shahry Endless and Omanuna plans, which offer more internet and a world of benefits for up to 24 months, all without a con-

tract. Shahry Endless plans are designed to suit all data needs and budgets, offering Shahry Endless 5 users up to 3GB for RO5, Shahry Endless 7 users up to 6GB for RO7 and Shahry Endless 10 users up to 18GB for RO10, while Shahry Endless 15 users can get 24GB for RO15 and Shahry Endless 20 subscribers can receive a full 40GB for RO20.

In addition to more data, Shahry Endless users can also enjoy up to 2,000 free minutes on local calls and calls to Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and GCC countries, as well as up to 75 minutes for international calls to 100 other countries.

Hitches & Glitches launches tech-driven home security service

Dubai-based innovative and technology-driven home maintenance specialist Hitches & Glitches (H&G), part of the Farnek Group, has expanded its home maintenance offering with the launch of a new tech-enabled security service called 'H&G Neighbourhood Watch'.

The service applies to H&G customers who have bought and installed the Ring Video Doorbell Elite. The connected doorbell allows homeowners to answer the door from anywhere, via a two-way voice call and one-way live streaming of any visitor, through their smartphone app or computer.

However, if any homeowner notices any suspicious move-



ment captured by the Ring camera, they will now have the option to contact H&G, who will dispatch a security officer within 15-30 minutes to check on the property. After inspection, the

customer is then sent a report with any relevant images.

"Our experienced and professional security team can now provide homeowners, tenants and landlords, with peace of mind, by ensuring home safety and security, 24 hours a day. We envisage this service to be popular whether a home is left vacant during holiday periods, or while landlords and owners are overseas," said Kelvin Vargheese, director of H&G.

"Although the service is tech-driven, it is not too dissimilar to a residents' neighbourhood watch scheme and if during a call out we do notice any criminal activity or indeed damage to the property we will inform the owner

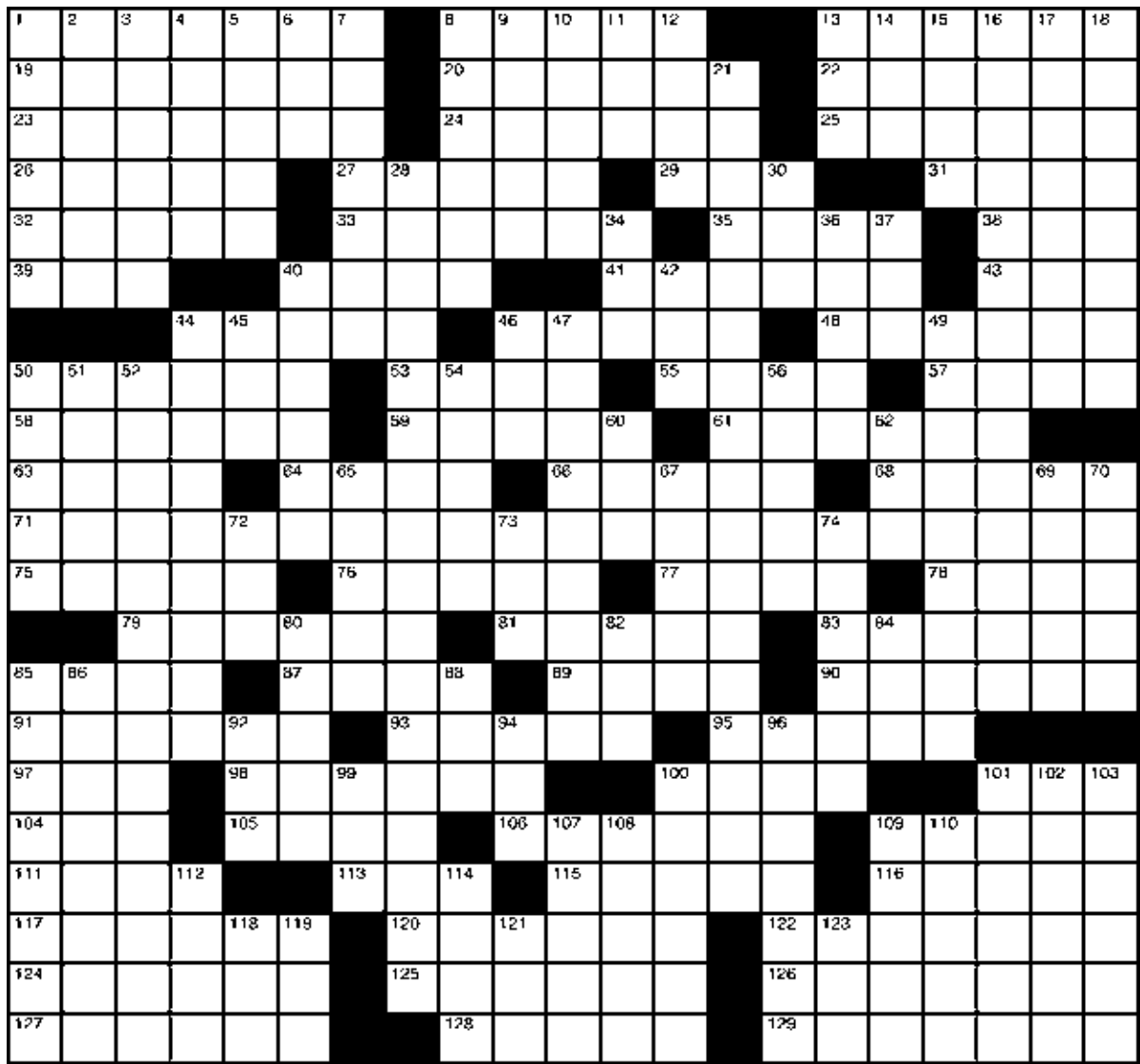
and the relevant authorities if necessary," he added..

Demand has soared for smart home security gadgets, as improved technology has made devices easier to use and more affordable, especially those with remote options for when homeowners are away from home, for any length of time.

H&G partnered with Ring in 2018, to retail and install its home security products and solutions to residences throughout the UAE.

Other products available for installation through H&G include The Ring Floodlight Cam, the first motion-activated security camera with two-way talk, built-in floodlights, and a siren.

DAILY CROSSWORD



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- ACROSS**

1 Unfair treatment

8 Less chancy

13 Diagrams

19 Accept

20 Shmmering

22 Decide not to participate

23 Nut cracker

24 Stays still, nautically

25 Stanley

Kowalski's better half

26 Hindu social class

27 UniversitO, e.g.

29 Part of Great Brit.

31 Thailand, formerly

32 "...wish upon ____"

33 Recluses

35 Mideast resident

38 That ship, nautically

39 Football linemen: abbr.

40 Stitches

41 What ____

43 Attila's tag, with "The"

44 Colonial India term of respect

46 Tough to eat

48 Brawn

50 City on Puget Sound

53 Sweet sandwich
- 55 It's a bowl of cherries, to some

57 "If ____ a nickel. . ."

58 Like some nerve cells

59 Site of a 1945 conference

61 In ____; quickly

63 "The ____ Love": golden oldie

64 Over and done with

66 Reverence

68 Architectural support

71 Make a burro bray?

75 Localities

76 Schnozzola

77 In this spot

78 Burn the surface

79 Urbanized, like ancient Troy

81 Airline of the past

83 Uncommon

85 Korda of tennis

87 Worms and such

89 Author Morrison

90 Love nests

91 Gourmands

93 "Beyond Peace" author

95 Is so bold as to

97 Bat wood

98 Thread partner

100 Irritable

101 Musical notes
- 104 Drink or bread

105 Thesis start

106 Toy

109 Author Hite

111 Whippersnappers

113 Ford or Lincoln

115 Stairway post

116 Sonja on skates

117 Image-related

120 1998 Olympic site

122 24,902-mile imaginary line

124 Colorless, poisonous gas

125 Japanese tradition

126 Daybreak

127 Ancient celibate

128 Charger

129 Came to terms

DOWN

1 Scoundrel

2 Appalled

3 Takes hold of

4 Kind of wing, or wave

5 Searcher for congers

6 ____ crow; backed down

7 Siren

8 Clip joints?

9 Spry

10 Escapee

11 Some MIT grads

12 Be worthy of

13 Literary monogram
- 14 Poppycock!

15 Blows away, so to speak

16 Customs agents at the Warsaw Airport?

17 Luau entertainment

18 Having anthers

21 "Keep away" game

28 Figures in front of a drugstore-cigar store?

30 Term of address, at a pub

34 Compass direction

36 Came across again

37 Actress Joanne

40 Shannon of the Broncos

42 Hooter

44 Lonely jewel?

45 Doc bloc

46 Animator's frame

47 Thorny political issue?

49 "You're So Vain"?

50 "Buccaneers" Bay

51 "____ of starcrossed lovers"

52 Decipher a message in Morse code?

54 Proportion

56 Vestibule

60 Rhone feeder

62 Prefix with bar
- 65 Not docked

67 Hawke or Allen

69 Most insignificant

70 Fictional Jane, et al.

72 Victor over T.E.D.

73 Shorten, with "off"

74 "____ Rides Again"

80 "Hedda Gabler" playwright

82 Deauville denial

84 Historic start?

85 Resembling a Bosc or Bartlett

86 Comedy of '40s radio

88 No later than

92 Biochemist's letters

94 Signed, in a way

96 Eternal

99 And on and on. . .

100 Johnny Depp movie role

101 Soup seed

102 Melodic

103 Hit the roof

107 Ludicrous

108 AI ____; cooking style

109 Sidetrack

110 Ticker

112 Snicker's partner

114 Cheers

118 B & B

119 Cave opening?

121 Skedaddle!

123 What, in Juárez?

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Monday's skies put the pep back in your step. The moon trots through practical Taurus, priming you to get down to business and activate your natural talents towards your personal projects. It is easy for you to push your career agenda forward.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Opportunities are likely to be rolling in around career matters. The reality-based Taurus moon has all eyes on you and turns your attention towards your current set of ambitions. Luna's link to Jupiter makes it easy to make big strides forward.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

This time of year is all about career advancement. Today's skies offer a prime opportunity to get ahead with your personal achievements, as the moon trots through Taurus giving you all the energy you need to pour yourself into your workload.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

Anything you apply yourself toward should work out in your favour. The moon spends the day roaming through your sign, signalling an inner need to cover your own bases first. Luna's link to the sun offers great opportunities for self-expression.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

As a Virgo, you can occasionally find yourself married to your routine. Today's skies encourage you to step away from your workload and the same ol' mundane tasks, as the moon treks through peace-seeking Taurus. Try adventuring to somewhere.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Today's skies are perfectly primed for your self-expression. The moon meanders through Taurus, spending the day alongside Jupiter and the self-affirming sun, creating an atmosphere that significantly boosts your self-confidence.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

Today's skies offer quiet, inwardly-rewarding moments for you, Gemini. The moon meanders through peace-seeking Taurus, calling you away from your social life and asking you to touch base with the parts of you that crave a recharge.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Don't expect to be your regular social-butterfly self. You need peace and quiet, as well as deep intimate contact with other people. Today's skies offer you rewards on the internal level, rather than out in the real world. Keep it pensive and intimate.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Your home is likely to feel like a sanctuary. The moon roams through Taurus, summoning you homeward for a period of quiet reflection. Spending the day beautifying your environment helps you reap major internal rewards of peace.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

It's easy to ride the good vibes in the air. The moon treks through stable Taurus, aligning with the self-affirming sun and big-dreams Jupiter, making it easy to embrace a happy-go-lucky mood. Any interaction should be in your favour today.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Partnership has been an area of your life undergoing considerable growing pains, Scorpio. Today's skies offer the opportunity to smooth things over and enjoy romantic reverie once more, as the moon treks through your opposite sign of simplicity-craving Taurus.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Don't keep your thoughts to yourself. The reality-based Taurus moon enhances your need for important exchanges, and her beneficial link to the sun and opportunity-bringing Jupiter offers promises progress stemming from your conversations.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What does Elijah in Hebrew mean?

a) My God is Yahweh

b) Gift of God

c) Strength of God

d) He who enlarges the people

2. Whom did Elijah warn of a drought?

a) Jehu

b) Ahab

c) Omri

d) Josiah

3. Who fed Elijah at Cherith?

a) Parrots

b) Jebusites

c) Ravens

d) Hittites

Answers: 1: a 2: b 3: c

KIDS COLOURING

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

BOGGLER

F	T	A	E
F	Y	E	S
E	A	N	S
I	S	B	D

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (SEPTEMBER 06)

ATTEMPT	PRIDE	BALLOT	OPTIMA	RECUR	QUIPOUND	SHATTER	PHIPPIER	REACQUIN	REACQUIN
SAON	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS
REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS	BAHAIN	RAVE	REACT	ORAINS

WORD BUILDER

You have three minutes to find all the words contained in this word.

Rules: Words should be at least four letters long, proper nouns and duplicates don't count

MEDICAL SUPPLY SERVICES

for Home, Hospital, Clinic, School, College, Ministry, Club, Company/Factory

3M N95



1860/1860S

3M N95



8210

3M N95



9010



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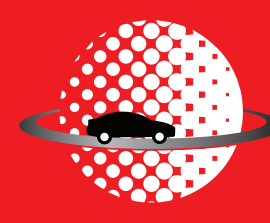
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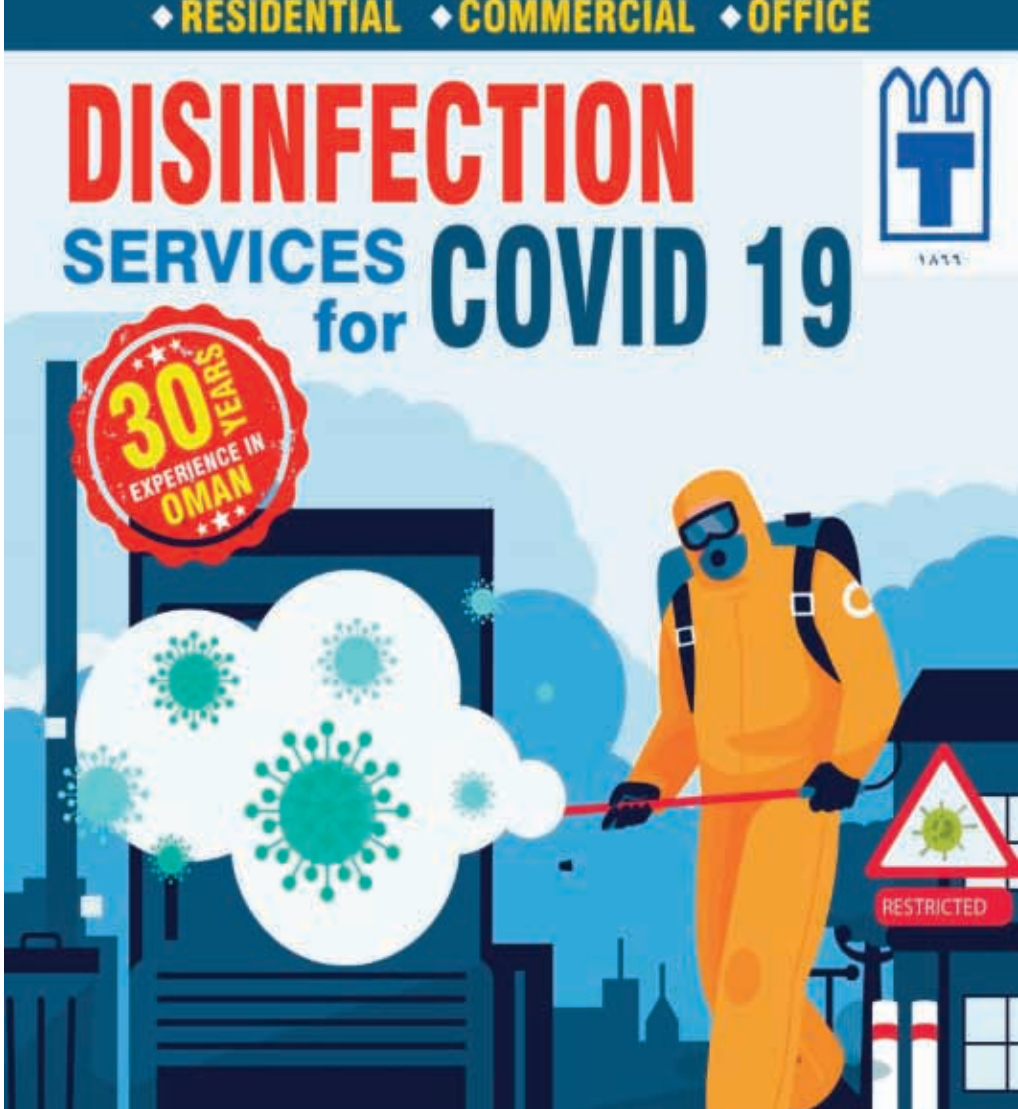


Jiya
September 07

Happy birthday Jiya.
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Mummy, Chachu, Chachi

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EUROPEAN HEAVYWEIGHTS ENJOY WINNING STARTS



France's Kylian Mbappe scores against Sweden during their UEFA Nations League match in Stockholm, Sweden, on Saturday (AFP)

UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

Paris, France - European heavyweights England, world champions France, holders Portugal and Belgium all enjoyed winning starts to their UEFA Nations League campaigns on Saturday even if there were signs of international rust following the coronavirus shutdown.

And in an early game on Sunday, Wales extended their perfect start to the Nations League campaign as Liverpool defender Neco Williams snatched a last-gasp winner in 1-0 victory over Bulgaria at the Cardiff City Stadium.

England needed a stoppage-time penalty to beat Iceland 1-0 while France saw off Sweden by the same scoreline. Portugal shrugged off the absence of Cristiano Ronaldo to thrash Croatia 4-1 with top-ranked Belgium coming away from Denmark with a 2-0 win.

In Reykjavik, Raheem Sterling's last minute penalty

salvaged England from another embarrassing result against Iceland. Gareth Southgate's men also survived going down to ten men and seeing Birkir Bjarnason miss a late spot-kick for the hosts.

Four years on from one of English football's most embarrassing nights in losing 1-2 to Iceland at Euro 2016, England were far from the free-scoring force that romped through Euro 2020 qualifying in their first match for ten months.

Harry Kane had an early goal wrongly ruled out for offside before Kyle Walker was sent-off for two bookable offences 20 minutes from time.

All of Iceland's good defensive work was undone in the 89th minute when Sverrir Ingason was also harshly dismissed for a second booking when he blocked Sterling's shot with his arm.

With Kane having been replaced by Mason Greenwood, Sterling took responsibility from

spot, but the drama did not end there. Straight from kick-off, Joe Gomez was adjudged to have bundled over Holmbert Fridjonsson inside the area, but Bjarnason blazed the resulting penalty over.

"The sending off is a key moment because it is very difficult to win games of football when you go down to ten men. It was an unnecessary red card," said Southgate of Walker's dismissal.

'Got away with it'

"We leave here with the win but a bit flat because in the end it feels like we got away with it," added the England manager.

Kylian Mbappe scored with France's only shot on goal in Solna to give the world champions a 1-0 victory over Sweden.

Mbappe picked up the ball wide of the goal in the 41st minute, squeezed past two defenders, waited for goalkeeper Robin Olsen to go down and then clipped the ball just inside the

post from the narrowest of angles.

"It was a committed match, not a great match," said France manager Didier Deschamps. "It was a good back-to-school game, considering the fitness levels."

In Porto, Cristiano Ronaldo was missing with an infected toe - caused by a bee sting according to Italian media - but Portugal were still too good for a disappointing Croatia.

Joao Cancelo, Diogo Jota, with his first international goal, Joao Felix and Andre Silva were all on target for Portugal who also hit the woodwork three times.

Croatia were without Luka Modric and Ivan Rakitic who boast a total of 233 caps between them.

'Not Croatia I know'

Bruno Petkovic grabbed a stoppage-time consolation for the visitors. "This wasn't the Croatia I know. We let them

do whatever they wanted.

Belgium defeated Denmark 2-0 in Copenhagen, handing the Danes a first home loss in four years and an opening defeat for new coach Kasper Hjulmand.

Belgium, without the retired Vincent Kompany and Kevin de Bruyne, who was attending the birth of his third child, were in front after just nine minutes.

Lyon defender Jason Denayer tucked away his first international goal from Dries Mertens' free-kick.

Mertens added the second in the 77th minute when the Napoli striker pounced on a loose ball after Kasper Schmeichel had blocked a Yuri Tielmans effort with his legs.

Other results: League C: Group 1: Cyprus 0 Montenegro 2, Azerbaijan 1 Luxembourg 2; **Group 2:** North Macedonia 2 Armenia 1, Estonia 0 Georgia 1. **League D: Group 2:** Gibraltar 1 San Marino 0.

Barca should have allowed Messi to leave: Enrique

Madrid, Spain - Lionel Messi's former Barcelona coach Luis Enrique, now the boss of Spain, suggested on Saturday the club should have allowed the Argentina forward to leave.

"It's a sensitive issue," said Luis Enrique, on Sunday.

"I think clubs are above every player. Barcelona was founded in 1899 and is one of the best in the world, it has won titles forever.

"Clearly there has been a wonderful relationship. Leo has made Barca grow

to win titles without Messi just as Messi will continue to be wonderful for many years if he leaves."

Messi's grudging acceptance that he will have to stay put after losing his stand-off with club president Josep Maria Bartomeu means his long-term future is still in doubt.

The 33 year old was absent from training on Saturday.

Messi announced on Friday he would be reluctantly staying and launched a stinging attack on Bartomeu,

I think clubs are above every player. Barcelona was founded in 1899 and is one of the best in the world, it has won titles forever

LUIS ENRIQUE

exponentially but I would have liked it a lot more if an agreement had been reached."

Luis Enrique managed Messi at Barca from 2014 to 2017 and they won the treble together in 2015.

He added: "Sooner or later Messi will stop playing at Barca. The club will continue

claiming he had broken his word to let him leave.

The absence of any new contract means that even if he is not allowed to leave this summer, Messi could negotiate with other teams from January 1 and go for free when his current deal expires in July.

AFP



A file photo of Luis Enrique (left) and Lionel Messi

Tanak flies to Estonia win

RALLY OF ESTONIA

Tartu, Estonia - World champion Ott Tänak survived a late scare to deliver a popular home victory at Estonia's first-ever FIA World Rally Championship round on Sunday afternoon.

He led most of the way to win the three-day gravel road Rally Estonia by 22.2sec in a Hyundai i20. Teammate Craig Breen completed a 1-2 for Hyundai Motorsport and matched his career-best result. Estonia was the 600th WRC round since the championship began in 1973 and marked the championship's

return after a six-month pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tänak was the pre-event favourite and after taking the lead early in Saturday's opening leg, the Estonian was never headed. Tänak climbed to third in the championship, 13 points behind leader Sébastien Ogier.

Second for an emotional Breen enabled the squad to close the gap to manufacturers' series leaders Toyota Gazoo Racing to five points.

Irishman Breen finished only 4.7sec clear of Ogier, admitting his attempt to measure his pace

in the final stage allowed the Frenchman to come closer than intended.

Ogier headed a trio of Yaris finishers, satisfied that a podium keeps his hopes of a seventh world title on track, but disappointed he did not have the grip to match Tänak's pace on Saturday afternoon.

Elfyn Evans and Kalle Rovanperä were fourth and fifth, both losing time with tyre troubles.

Round five takes crews to Rally Turkey which is based in Marmaris on September 18-20.

AFP



Otto Tanak in action during the final day of the Rally of Estonia on Sunday



Im Sung-jae



Dustin Johnson

Im makes charge, Johnson in lead

PGA TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP
Washington, US - South Korea's Im Sung-jae birdied three of the last four holes but top-ranked Dustin Johnson clung to a one-stroke lead after Saturday's second round of the US PGA Tour Championship.

Im fired a six-under-par 64 to finish on 12-under but struggling Johnson, last in the field in driving accuracy after finding only two-of-14 fairways, closed

with a four-foot birdie putt to lead on 13-under after 36 holes at East Lake in Atlanta.

"Tough one. It was up and down. Just didn't drive it straight enough," said Johnson.

"Everything else feels good. I managed my game pretty well.

Im, 22, would be the second-youngest FedEx Cup winner, two months older than Jordan Spieth when the American captured the 2015 crown.

"I was happy with my shots," Im said. "I hit a lot of fairways, so it made my approach shots a lot easier. That gave me a lot of good looks at birdie, which helped me go low."

Johnson scrambled to a 70 to hold off charging Im with American Xander Schauffele third on 11-under after a 65 and third-ranked American Justin Thomas fourth on ten-under.

Spain's Jon Rahm, PGA

Championship winner Collin Morikawa and England's Tyrrell Hatton shared fifth on nine-under in the season-ending showdown for a US\$15mn play-off prize.

Defending playoff champion McIlroy, who became a father on last Monday with the birth of daughter Poppy, fired a 71. It included a chunked shot from the rough into a lake at 18.

AFP

Gasly wins thrilling Italian Grand Prix, Hamilton penalised



Pierre Gasly celebrates after claiming his maiden Formula One win at the Italian Grand Prix in Monza on Sunday

FORMULA ONE

ITALIAN GRAND PRIX

Monza, Italy - Pierre Gasly secured a maiden Formula One triumph on Sunday when he won a tumultuous Italian Grand Prix for the Alpha Tauri team after crashes, penalties and safety cars had tipped expectations upside down at Monza.

The first French race winner in 24 years seized his opportunity and resisted late pressure from Carlos Sainz of McLaren to claim his team's second victory with Lance Stroll finishing third for Racing Point. "It was such a crazy race," said Gasly.

It was the Alpha Tauri outfit's second win on Italian soil - the first having been scored for them when they raced as Toro Rosso by Sebastian Vettel, his maiden F1 win in a rain-hit race in 2008.

Pole-sitter Lewis Hamilton was on his way to a comfortable win before a ten-second stop-go penalty for taking a pit stop when

said the 24-year-old from Rouen. "I don't think I'm realising what's happening right now. We've been through so much in the past 18 months. I have no words."

Leclerc escapes crash

Lando Norris came home fourth in the second McLaren ahead of Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes and Daniel Ricciardo of Renault.

Despite the penalty, Hamilton still managed to extend his record run to 41 successive points finishes. He has a 47-point lead over Bottas in the championship.

Hamilton also had the fastest lap of the race on Sunday as he finished ahead of Esteban Ocon in the second Renault, Daniil Kvyat in the second Alpha Tauri and Sergio Perez in the second Racing Point.

Ferrari endured another torrid weekend with last year's winner Charles Leclerc walking away after surviving a high-speed

also had a poor start and fell from fifth to eighth.

A safety car was deployed on lap 20 when Kevin Magnussen pulled up close to the pit lane entry. Hamilton led, but was aware he faced a possible penalty, before the safety car came in on lap 23.

Then, two laps later, Leclerc crashed at close to 260km/h at the Parabolica, hitting the barriers heavily. He was severely shaken, but climbed out and jogged back to the pits.

By then, Giovinazzi had his ten-second stop-go penalty, a sanction repeated for Hamilton as the race was red-flagged to a halt for repairs to the tyre barriers. After 25 minutes, the race restarted on lap 28, Hamilton again moved clear before pitting. Verstappen then retired from 14th as Sainz charged through to second, passing Raikkonen, in pursuit of the Frenchman, who hung on till the end.

AFP

I don't think I'm realising what's happening right now. We've been through so much in the past 18 months. I have no words

PIERRE GASLY



the pit lane was closed, pushed the Mercedes world champion to the back of the pack. The six-time champion eventually ended up in seventh place.

Gasly, who was dropped by Red Bull to rejoin the junior sister team last year, jumped for joy as he leapt from his car, was the first French driver to win a Grand Prix since Olivier Panis won the 1996 Monaco Grand Prix.

"Honestly, it's unbelievable,"

crash that led to the decisive 25-minute red-flag interruption.

Four-time champion Vettel, retired after a brakes failure while Max Verstappen also retired with engine problems.

On a sunlit afternoon, Hamilton sped clear from his record 94th pole position. Behind him, Bottas struggled to depart and dropped to sixth on the opening lap as Sainz and Norris took second and third. Verstappen

ITALIAN GP RESULTS

[TOP TEN]

1	Pierre Gasly	(1hr 47min 06.056sec)
2	Carlos Sainz Jr	(+0.415sec)
3	Lance Stroll	(+3.358)
4	Lando Norris	(+6.000)
5	Valtteri Bottas	(+7.108)
6	Daniel Ricciardo	(+8.391)
7	Lewis Hamilton	(+17.245)
8	Esteban Ocon	(+18.691)
9	Daniil Kvyat	(+22.208)
10	Sergio Pérez	(+23.224)

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

[TOP TEN]

1	Hamilton	(164 pts)
2	Bottas	(117)
3	Max Verstappen	(110)
4	Stroll	(57)
5	Norris	(57)
6	Alexander Albon	(48)
7	Charles Leclerc	(45)
8	Gasly	(43)
9	Sainz	(41)
10	Ricciardo	(41)



Tadej Pogacar

Roglic takes Tour lead as Pogacar grabs stage

TOUR DE FRANCE

Laruns, France - Slovenians took the laurels on the Tour de France on Sunday as rookie Tadej Pogacar won a Pyrenean mountain slog and his compatriot Primož Roglic took over the overall lead. Overnight leader Adam Yates of Britain made a valiant effort to keep hold of the yellow jersey but fell gradually away on the final climb as the gradient hit 12 per cent.

Pre-Tour favourite Roglic has been the form man this season and after Sunday's second place leads defending champion Ineos leader Egan Bernal of Colombia by 21 seconds.

Pogacar said at the winning line that he remembered little of the frantic sprint that gave him a first Tour de France win as he pipped Roglic on the line. "I wanted to gain as much time as possible," said Pogacar, who twice lost time earlier in the week, but is now within 41s of the lead.

French pair Guillaume Martin and Romain Bardet are third and fourth overall with Colombian duo Nairo Quintana and Rigoberto Uran within touching distance. The 153km ninth stage set off from Basque town Pau, and there were many berets being worn along the route, and took in five climbs including two category one mountains.

Monday is the first rest day but a nervous wait for results of COVID-19 swab tests await the riders with a ban on teams with two positive cases.

AFP

Mumbai to open IPL title defence against Chennai

IPL 2020

Dubai, UAE - The Mumbai Indians will begin their IPL title defence against the team they took the trophy away from last season - the Chennai Super Kings - on September 19 in Abu Dhabi, at 6pm, Oman time.

The IPL schedule was finally made public on Sunday, just under two weeks off from the start of the competition, and features ten double-header days.

The schedule has been released only for the round-robin stage of the tournament.

In all, Abu Dhabi will host 20 round-robin games, Dubai 24 and Sharjah 12.

Mumbai and the Kolkata Knight Riders will play a majority of their games (eight each) in Abu Dhabi. The Sunrisers Hyderabad will play eight of their games in Dubai, while the Super Kings, the Kings XI Punjab, the Delhi Capitals and the Royal Challengers Bangalore will play seven each in Dubai. Only the Rajasthan Royals' matches are more spread out - they play six in Dubai, five in Abu Dhabi, and three in Sharjah.

The Royals and the Knight Riders will be the last teams to

play their first matches and that could be due to the late arrival of a handful of their key players from the limited-overs series between England and Australia in England, which ends on September 16.

While Steven Smith, Jos Buttler, Jofra Archer and Tom Curran are part of the Royals' squad, Eoin Morgan, Pat Cummins and Tom Banton are part of the Knight Riders'.

Although IPL rules make it mandatory for every participant to undergo a six-day quarantine upon arrival in the UAE, and Abu Dhabi's requirements extend that to 14 days, it has been said that those coming from the England-Australia series could be allowed exemptions given they would be travelling straight from one biosecure bubble into another, but this remains to be confirmed.

Double-headers only in October

The double-headers begin on October 3. October is typically when temperatures - which, as expected, are consistently breaching 40°C during the day-time at present - begin to

come down in the region.

Mumbai and the Super Kings are the IPL's most successful franchises - with four and three titles respectively - and form its most prominent rivalry; no team has beaten the Super Kings as many times as Mumbai, who have a 17-11 record against them including a last-ball one-run win in last season's final.

Mumbai also bring the round-robin stage of the league to a close, pitted against the Sunrisers on November 3 in Sharjah.

The IPL put in a disclaimer on the schedule, saying it is 'subject to change for any reason' deemed fit by the BCCI. The clause suggests the IPL is wary of a situation wherein a team(s) is/are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. There has been no confirmation yet from the IPL on whether spectators will be allowed to attend the games - and there was no mention of it in on Sunday.

BCCI chief Sourav Ganguly had said it will happen later in the tournament, but there remains doubt over this especially given the upsurge in COVID-19 cases in the UAE over the last fortnight. Cricinfo



A file photo of Chennai Super Kings' captain MS Dhoni and his Mumbai Indians' counterpart Rohit Sharma



Buttler leads England to T20I series victory

ENGLAND VS AUSTRALIA SECOND T20I

Southampton, UK - Jos Buttler made a dashing 77 not out as England beat Australia by six wickets in a series-clinching win in the second Twenty20 international at Southampton on Sunday.

Victory saw England go an unbeatable 2-0 up in a three-match contest. England, set 158 to win, finished on 158 for four with seven balls to spare.

They needed 18 off the last two overs, with Australia having failed to score 19 off two overs in a dramatic two-run defeat in the first game on Friday.

But England got there in five balls from Adam Zampa, with Moeen Ali hitting a six and a four off successive deliveries from the leg-spinner. Buttler finished the match with a huge six off Zampa.

He faced just 54 balls, including eight fours and two sixes with this innings Buttler's highest score in a T20I, surpassing his 73 not out against Sri Lanka at Southampton four years ago.

Victory was set up by England's attack, who held Australia to a modest 157 for seven after the tourists had won the toss.

Jofra Archer had David Warner caught behind for a third-ball duck and Australia

were 89 for five with seven overs left before a late-order rally gave them a glimmer of hope.

England saw Jonny Bairstow drive Mitchell Starc for two fours before he fell to the left-arm quick in bizarre fashion when, swinging round from a pull, he knocked over the stumps with his bat and was out hit wicket for 19. But Buttler drove paceman Kane Richardson for six and the in-form David Malan hit two fours off successive deliveries from spinner Glenn Maxwell.

And when left-arm spinner Ashton Agar came on, Buttler skilfully reverse-swept him for four. Pat Cummins was recalled to the attack but left-hander Malan drove him over extra-cover for a four before Buttler pulled him for another boundary.

A stand of 87 ended when Malan holed out for 42 off Agar but Buttler continued to manipulate the field.

England made a sensational start after losing the toss when fast bowler Archer had the dangerous Warner caught behind for nought. Warner reviewed immediately but replays confirmed he had gloved the ball and Australia were nought for one.

Australia were three for two in the second over, after left-hander Alex Carey, promoted to

No 3 in place of star batsman Steve Smith, gave himself room to drive but only edged Mark Wood to wicketkeeper Buttler.

Smith, in at No 4, pulled Tom Curran for six. But Smith was run out for ten by England captain Eoin Morgan's underarm direct hit from midwicket with just one stump to aim at.

AFP

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA

D Warner	c Buttler b Archer	0 (3)
A Finch	b Jordan	40 (33)
A Carey	c Buttler b Wood	2 (7)
S Smith	run out	10 (7)
M Stoinis	c Malan b Rashid	35 (24)
G Maxwell	c Buttler b Jordan	26 (18)
A Agar	run out	23 (20)
P Cummins	not out	13 (5)
M Starc	not out	2 (1)
Extras	(lb 2, w 4)	6

TOTAL 157 for seven in 20 overs.

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-3, 3-30, 4-79, 5-89, 6-132, 7-155

Bowling: J Archer 4-0-32-1, M Wood 4-0-25-1, T Curran 3-0-25-0, A Rashid 4-0-25-1, C Jordan 4-0-40-2, Moeen Ali 1-0-8-0

ENGLAND

J Buttler	not out	77 (54)
J Bairstow	hit wicket b Starc	9 (11)
D Malan	c Stoinis b Agar	42 (32)
T Banton	c Cummins b Agar	2 (4)
E Morgan	c Maxwell b Zampa	7 (14)
Moeen Ali	not out	13 (14)
Extras	(lb 5, w 3)	8

TOTAL: 158 for four in 18.5 overs.

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-106, 3-122, 4-135

Bowling: M Starc 4-0-25-1, P Cummins 3-0-24-0, K Richardson 2-0-19-0, G Maxwell 2-0-16-0, A Zampa 3.5-0-42-1, A Agar 4-0-27-2

11th Sailing Arabia-The Tour from Jan 24

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The 11th edition of Oman Sail's flagship regatta, EFG Sailing Arabia-The Tour (SATT), will begin in Salalah on January 24 and conclude in Muscat on February 6.

In a press statement released on Sunday, Oman Sail, the organisers of the race, said that the regatta will visit five venues and teams will compete in Coastal Raid at all the venues. Also included will be three in-port races and one off-shore leg.

SATT provides a platform for talented local sailors to compete against strong international teams in Oman's pleasant winter conditions. The blend of short sprints and longer campaigns deliver intense racing duels at diverse locations.

Saleh al Jabri, captain of the Jewel of Muscat and race project manager for SATT 2021 said, "EFG Sailing Arabia-The Tour has become one of Oman Sail's



Saleh al Jabri

most anticipated events each year. It attracts sailing talent from across the globe and also provides an opportunity for Omani sailors.

"The Tour also creates avenues for vital community engagement and the chance to share our beautiful country with the world. This year marks the eleventh edition and the third to be held only in Oman."

Jabri added: "Sailing Arabia-

The Tour has grown in stature over the years to become an important part of the international sailing calendar.

"This year it is in a position to significantly boost domestic tourism, empower local communities all along the coast and demonstrate the sultanate's deep-rooted maritime traditions to a growing audience."

Each team will compete on identical DIAM24 boats in a pure test of preparation and racing skill in good weather conditions.

Since its debut in 2011, SATT has attracted some of the biggest names in sailing to experience for 15 days of racing.

The 2021 SATT will begin in Salalah, where a number of teams from home and abroad will line up for the first Coastal Raid at Mirbat and the first in-port race at the Hawana Salalah Marina.

The teams then make their way up the coast, with stopovers in Duqm, Masirah Island, two off-shore legs between Sur and Ras al Hadd, before heading



A file photo of a team in action during the tenth edition of EFG Sailing Arabia-The Tour earlier this year

towards a two-day finale in Muscat with a Coastal Raid and in-port race at Al Mouj Muscat where the trophy would be handed.

Preliminary schedule: January 23, 2021: Opening ceremony in Salalah; January 23-25: Coastal Raid, Mirbat; in-port race, Hawana Salalah Marina; January

27-28: Coastal Raid and in-port race in Duqm; January 30-31: Two Coastal Raids, Masirah Island; February 2-3: Off-shore legs, Sur to Ras al Hadd and

return; February 5-6: Coastal Raid and in-port race, Marina Bandar Al Rowdha; February 6: closing ceremony, Al Mouj Muscat.



SERENA ADVANCES AS FRESH CONTROVERSY ERUPTS



Serena Williams returns a shot against Sloane Stephens during their third-round match in the Queens borough of New York City, US, on Saturday

New York, US - Serena Williams battled into the US Open last-16 on Saturday as the tournament endured fresh controversy after New York health officials ordered the women's top doubles pairing be withdrawn over coronavirus restrictions.

Serena, chasing a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title, came from a set down to oust 2017 champion Sloane Stephens 2-6, 6-2, 6-2, in what she called an 'intense' encounter on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"In that first set I don't think she made any errors, honestly. She was just playing so clean and I just said, 'I don't want to lose in straight sets,'" said Serena.

With spectators barred from this year's Flushing Meadows

event due to the pandemic, second and fourth seeds Sofia Kenin and Naomi Osaka took advantage of suites they have been assigned to check out the competition.

"It's cool us players can watch each other. It's interesting, I like it," said Serena, who will play 15th seed Maria Sakkari for a place in the quarterfinals.

The Greek player, who stunned Serena at the Western & Southern Open last month, progressed with a 6-3, 6-1 dismantling of America's 22nd seed Amanda Anisimova.

Doubles top seeds withdrawn

Off the court, No 1 seeds Kristina Mladenovic and Timea Babos were yanked from the women's doubles competition

after Mladenovic was instructed to quarantine for coming in contact with French compatriot Benoit Paire, who tested positive for COVID-19 last weekend.

"All persons who were identified as having prolonged close contact with the infected player will quarantine in their rooms for the remainder of their

quarantine period," the United States Tennis Association (USTA) said in a statement.

The USTA said local public health authorities had issued the quarantine notices, which prevented the players commuting from their hotel to the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

"The USTA is obligated to



A file photo of Kristina Mladenovic (left) and Timea Babos



Dominic Thiem celebrates a point against Marin Cilic on Saturday

opportunity' to end her seven-year wait for a third Grand Slam after booking a last-16 berth with an easy win over Poland's Iga Swiatek.

Thiem, Medvedev reach fourth round

Back on the court on Saturday, Russian third seed Daniil Medvedev, Italy's sixth seed Matteo Berrettini and Andrey Rublev, all entered the last-16 with easy three-set wins.

Second seed Dominic Thiem also progressed to round four, overcoming 2014 champion Marin Cilic 6-2, 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

Thiem said he must raise his game if he is to win a first Grand Slam at the 2020 US Open after ousting Marin Cilic.

"I felt a little bit flat," said Thiem, explaining his labours in sets three and four. "It's normal, it's really late, (and) without the crowd," he added.

The world No 3 will play 20-year-old Canadian hotshot Felix Auger-Aliassime for a place in the quarterfinals.

The 15th seed blew away France's Corentin Moutet 6-1, 6-0, 6-4 in just 1hr 57 mins, becoming the first player born in the 2000s to reach a Grand Slam fourth round.

And Canada's 94th-ranked Vasek Pospisil shocked eighth-seeded Spaniard Roberto Bautista Agut 7-5, 2-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 and Australia's 21st seed Alex de Minaur upset 11th-seeded Russian Karen Khachanov 6-4, 0-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-1.

Elsewhere, America's Frances Tiafoe obliterated Hungarian Marton Fucsovics 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 in 1hr 44mins to set up a last-16 clash with Daniil Medvedev.

Italian sixth seed Matteo Berrettini and Russia's tenth seed Andrey Rublev both enjoyed easy three-set wins to set up a last-16 clash against each other.

Rublev only gave up four games as he pulverised unseeded Italian Salvatore Caruso 6-0, 6-4, 6-0.

AFP

All persons who were identified as having prolonged close contact with the infected player will quarantine in their rooms for the remainder of their quarantine period

UNITED STATES TENNIS ASSOCIATION

adhere to government guidance at the State, City and County level," the body said.

A spokesman for New York state's health department said the decision was 'in the best interest' of health and safety.

But France's Alize Cornet described the move as 'very brutal'.

"It's definitely weird because she could play her first round of singles and first round of doubles, and now suddenly she's kicked out," Cornet

added, after progressing to the last-16 when Madison Keys retired injured.

In the women's draw, unranked Bulgarian Tsvetana Pironkova, playing her first tournament in three years, knocked out 18th seed Donna Vekic.

Second seed Sofia Kenin defeated Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 7-6 (7-4), 6-3 to set up a match against Belgium's Elise Mertens for a quarterfinal place.

And former No 1 Victoria Azarenka said she had 'a great



VW RULES OUT 4-DAY WEEK
Volkswagen (VW) sees no need for a four-day week at its plants to secure jobs despite a growing shift to electric cars that require fewer workers, VW's head of labour relations, Bernd Osterloh said

BUSINESS

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Oman to launch unified system for OSS in all economic and free zones

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) is gearing up to implement a unified system for the one-stop-shop (OSS) in all the special economic zones and free zones as an implementation of the Royal Decree No (105/2020) to establish the Authority.

The Royal Decree stipulates that the Authority's competences include implementing the one-stop-shop system in the special economic zones and free zones.

OPAZ aims to put in place this unified system for the one-stop-shop in all its special economic and free zones in Duqm, Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazunah. In this regard, H E Eng Ahmed bin Hassan al Deeb, deputy chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones and Saleh bin Hamood al Hasni, paid a visit, on Sunday to Salalah Free Zone, a



press statement said.

They discussed the relevant procedures for implementing a one-stop-shop in Salalah Free Zone, reflecting the experience of the one-stop-shop in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm. During the visit, Hasni presented the different services provided by the one-stop-shop for investors, companies and the techniques

used through which the applications and transactions are processed.

Post visiting the free zones in Salalah, Al Mazunah, Sohar and the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, the concerned team will develop a strategy for implementing and streamlining the systems used in order to build a unified system that

will be applied in all these zones.

OPAZ was established as per the provision of the Royal Decree No 105/2020 issued on August 18, 2020. OPAZ will oversee the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, free zones in Sohar, Salalah and Al Mazuna and any other special economic zone or free zone in the sultanate.

Oman Container Line ranked among the best

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman Shipping Company's container service, Oman Container Line (OCL) at Asyad Group has been ranked 55th globally by the international database platform Alphaliner, for the capacity OCL offers as well as its reliable services in the Gulf and globally.

This global ranking enhances the leading status of the sultanate in maritime transport among the best countries in the world, Asyad Group said in a press statement. It said OCL ranking also reflects the government's efforts in developing the essential infrastructure in logistics services, aiming towards achieving the Notional Logistics Strategy 2040 to make the sultanate a global logistics centre.

The importance of this ranking lies in the fact that it was issued by Alphaliner, an internationally recognised database platform providing updated-ranking of the 100 largest container and liner operators based on capacity. The platform is used by liner shipping executives, container ship owners, shipbrokers and other shipping professionals. Alphaliner is also the knowledge base of the first choice used by port authorities, terminal opera-



tors, logistics companies, shippers, research companies and banks and other financial institutions.

Ibrahim al Nadhairi, acting CEO of Oman Shipping Company, said that OCL's global ranking at 55th is a testament to the efforts the company has put over the years to link Oman to the world through providing our customers with reliable services globally. "It is also a reflection of the hard work of the entire team working in this shipping company at all levels. The OCL's global ranking has brought the name of Oman among the top countries in the logistics sector. This has become possible only due to the focus of the country's leadership on the development of the infrastructure and logistics

sector," Nadhairi said.

Wasam al Najjar, general manager, corporate planning at Oman Shipping Company said, "There is no doubt that OCL entering Alphaliner index among 100 global companies is a high-lights the company's role in linking Omani ports to the main global trading routes through its Oman Express Line (OEX), in addition to its role in linking the sultanate's ports with UAE's through its Gulf Express Line (GEX)."

He noted that OCL aimed to connect India and Oman to the Upper Gulf through combining OEX and GEX service, as well as inaugurating the Oman Gulf Express (OGEX) service; linking Salalah, Duqm and Sohar in Oman with Arabian Gulf ports.

Value of property transactions drop 19% in January-July period

Muscat - The total value of property transactions in the sultanate fell 18.8 per cent to RO1.21bn during the first seven months of 2020 from RO1.49bn recorded in the same period of 2019, according to the figures released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The number of plots issued during the January-July period of this year stood at 92,929, a decline of 27.6 per cent compared to the same period a year ago when 128,336 plots were issued.

Of the total traded value at the end of July 2020, RO442.9mn worth transactions

were sales contracts, while RO719.8mn transactions were mortgage deals.

As many as 26,878 sales contracts were executed in the first seven months of 2020 against 34,637 contracts during the same period of 2019. However, the total number of mortgage contracts fell by 31 per cent to 6,706 contracts against 9,714 contracts in 2019.

Oman's government collected RO35.7mn as real estate transaction fees at the end of July 2020, which is a drop of 30.4 per cent compared to the same period of 2019.

ONA

NBO hosts event on European equity markets

Muscat - Continuing to bring in global industry knowledge to investors in the sultanate, National Bank of Oman (NBO) recently held a virtual event in collaboration with the Franco-German financial group, Oddo BHF, to discuss the outlook for European equity markets in 2020 and beyond.

Led by Pascal Riégis, global co-head of fundamental equities and head of European small & mid-cap equities, the WebEx-based event offered a macro-economic review of the largest European financial markets, discussed the impact of COVID-19 and the ongoing recovery in corporate sales and profitability, and what to expect in 2021. This was the latest dialogue held as part of a series of monthly events that the bank has hosted virtually on

a range of pertinent topics, helping its clients make sound financial decisions while supporting learning in the banking and investment sector.

Yaseen Hassan al Lawati, head of the investment banking division at NBO, said, "NBO is the leading trusted investment advisor and manager in Oman and as such we are focused on providing investment management services to help our clients in achieving their strategic goals. Part of our pro-active approach is to bring in experts from around the globe that can contribute their unique perspective. Since the current pandemic has halted physical events, we have kept the information flowing by moving to online platforms, continuing to support our clients' prosperity despite a challenging



Yaseen Hassan al Lawati

and ever-changing financial environment."

The conference started with a European macro-economic review and outlook for 2020 and 2021, covering GDP growth rates, inflation and interest rates, as well as country and sector-specific outlook on European financial markets, such as the UK, Germany, France and other large economies. It also touched on the impact and future expectations on sales and profitability of European companies during COVID-19, current market valuations and volatility, drawdowns during the initial shutdown periods and then the ongoing recovery, and also the performance distortion between large-cap stocks and mid/small-cap stocks, finishing with an insight on what to expect going forward.

Virus stricken global tourism industry seen to recover in 2021

Istanbul, Turkey - Comparing the current coronavirus outbreak to similar cases, the world tourism next year may expand 1.5 per cent from pre-pandemic 2019, with higher hopes for the year to come, according to a leader in the sector.

Bulut Bagci, head of the UK-based World Tourism Forum Institute (WTFI), said after the 2001 terrorist attacks and SARS epidemic of 2003, tourism narrowed dramatically but bounced back rapidly in the US and Asia.

"I'm completely positive the world will normalise after May 2021 - gradually the tourism sector will return to normal by 2024," he told Anadolu Agency. Bagci believes measures imposed worldwide to stem the spread of the coronavirus had negative effects on people. "I'm not waiting for similar lockdowns," he said.

As tourism narrowed 98 per cent in 2020, many firms were

affected, and figures showing the sector's position will be revealed in one or two months, he said.

Since originating in China last December, the pandemic has infected millions and claimed hundreds of thousands of lives globally. Measures to stem the spread hit several sectors deeply, especially travel, aviation, tourism, and manufacturing.

Bagci said the sector cannot afford strong pandemic measures for another year, with several aviation firms on the verge of bankruptcy. He said if a vaccine is approved in the coming months, people will go safely on vacation.

Bagci said due to the virus, hygiene and food service rules were revised permanently at tourist facilities. "People now check to see if there's a hospital nearby when they go on a vacation," he said.

Bagci said tourism also went digitised during the pandemic



A tourist stands in front of the Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris, France on Friday (AFP)

because customers chose digital channels for shopping, including holiday packages. He stated that the MICE sector (meetings, incentives, conferencing, exhibitions) will also revive in 2021.

"Digital events fall short for the MICE sector, online applications in this field aren't permanent," he said.

The WTFI organises the World Tourism Forum to host

leaders and key tourism players from different countries, he said, adding there are many fairs and events but the forum boasts the motto: "We host more Leaders than Others."

The forum has hosted about one dozen country leaders, more than 20 former leaders, 60 tourism ministers, and hundreds of sector representatives - CEOs and managers - Bagci said.

It is held in such hotspots as Istanbul, Antalya on the Turkish Riviera, Moscow, Ghana, and Angola, and is set to be held in Pakistan in 2021.

With specific recommendations and master plans, the institute helps countries attract more tourists and investments from foreign countries.

After the institute advised Ghana to ease visa conditions, its tourist numbers rose to 1.3mn annually, more than double its previous number, 600,000.

He said Angola also changed visa conditions to ease business travel to the country.

The forum is currently working with Pakistan to attract US\$10bn in foreign investment.

"We met with [Prime Minis-

ter] Imran Khan," he said. "Pakistan has several types of products for foreign investors but there are no world-class reports" showing the country's potential, he said.

He said the institute, headquartered in the UK, is especially active in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Bagci said the WTFI signed a new MoU with D8 (developing) bloc countries to enhance tourism capacity and boost tourism investments.

"The D8 Organization for Economic Cooperation and World Tourism Forum Institute are joining forces to reshape economies by supporting the tourism sector across the D8 member states," according to the agreement.

The forum will focus on the tourism sector of members Turkey, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria, and Iran, Bagci said.

Anadolu Agency

'World economy faces delayed recovery from COVID-19 crisis'

Hannover, Germany - The world faces a long and difficult road towards a full economic recovery despite the potential imminent development of a vaccine for COVID-19 and government stimulus packages that have so far pumped over US\$10tn into the global economy, according to a panel of leaders representing some of the world's largest organisations at the virtual edition of the Global Manufacturing and Industrialisation Summit (#GMIS2020) which was held from Friday to Saturday.

The heads of Mubadala Investment Company, Siemens, Honeywell and Schneider Electric joined a keynote panel on the second day of the #GMIS2020 Virtual Summit to discuss and debate 'A trillion-dollar question: In an age of digital restoration, how are leaders repurposing our economies to deal with a post-crisis era?.'

The panelists were all united in their praise of swift government financial actions taken to protect jobs and businesses amid the lockdowns imposed around the world to slow the spread of the coronavirus pandemic. However, they warned that this would likely lead to a period of economic stagnation in 2021, and possibly even through 2022, especially given the potential threat of a second or even further waves of the coronavirus.

Khaldoon Khalifa al Mubarak, managing director and group CEO, Mubadala said, "We have



seen the positive economic reaction to the financial steps taken by most governments, particularly in the large economies around the world. Getting back to a more stable period of economic activity, and visibility into business growth will take time."

Darius Adamczyk, chairman and CEO of Honeywell, agreed that governments had acted quickly and decisively and said that attention must now turn to financing the vast economic

stimulus that has been required to support the world's economies during the pandemic. He said, "There's been an incredible level of stimulus in the US, the EU and other economies as well. Now governments around the world are going to have to figure out a smart way to pay for this that doesn't damage the economies going forward."

Jean-Pascal Tricoire, chairman and CEO of Schneider Electric, warned there was a danger

Getting back to a more stable period of economic activity, and visibility into business growth will take time

KHALDOON AL MUBARAK

there would be a lost generation of youth who would struggle to find opportunities in a depressed economy in the coming years.

Tricoire added that government stimulus should also be directed towards SMEs which provide the lifeblood of the economy. "Large companies like us live within an ecosystem of many suppliers and smaller companies and it's very important that we help those companies through the crisis and actually use it to

help them modernise and digitalise, to be more sustainable and prepare for the future."

Joe Kaeser, CEO of Siemens, agreed that it was vital for government rescue packages to be channelled into the right areas. He said, "It's crucially important that we not only have trillions of dollars of government money and stimulus but also that this money is invested into future-oriented industries."

WAM

World food prices hit 6-month high: FAO

Istanbul, Turkey - Moving upward for the third consecutive month, global food prices hit a six-month high in August, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Thursday.

The food price index increased 2 per cent on a monthly basis, averaging 96.15 last month, as a weaker US dollar provided support to international prices of most agricultural commodities, the FAO said.

It noted that in August the price increases were more pronounced for sugar and vegetable oils with cereal prices also firming, though more modestly.

On the other hand, meat and dairy values kept steady near their July levels.

The FAO Food Price Index is a trade-weighted index that tracks international market prices of five major food commodity groups.

The sugar price index averaged 81.1 points in August, up 6.7 per cent from the previous month.

The latest month-on-month increase reflected the prospects of a reduction in production due to unfavourable weather conditions in the EU as well as in Thailand, the world's second-largest sugar exporter.

The dairy price index averaged 102.0 points last month, almost unchanged from July.

The vegetable oil price index averaged 98.7 points in August, up 5.9 per cent month-on-month and reaching its highest level since January 2020.

Anadolu Agency

MSM index falls 1.05% on weak activity

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Securities Market (MSM) fell 1.05 per cent to close at 3,706.86 points on Sunday.

Trading activity deteriorated from the previous session as turnover declined 66.76 per cent to RO325,910 and volumes fell 73.16 per cent to 2.06mn shares.

All the sectoral indices closed in red territory. Financial index fell 0.91 per cent, Industrial index declined 0.1 per cent and Services index fell 0.08 per cent. The MSM Shariah index closed down by 0.29 per cent at 521.25 points.

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

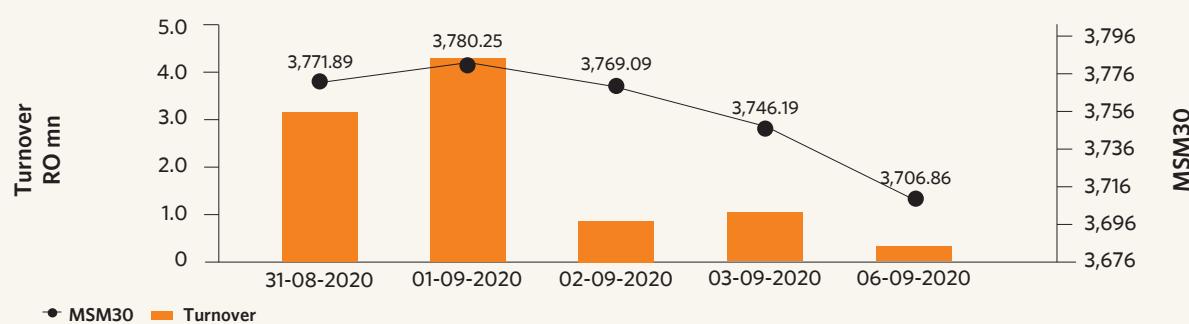
The four gainers were Oman Education & Training Investment (4.17 per cent), Al Maha Petroleum Products (3.13 per cent), Al Suwadi Power (1.85 per



cent) and Oman Refreshment (0.42 per cent). Top losers were Sohar International Bank (-4.76 per cent), Renaissance

Services (-2.92 per cent), Bank Nizwa (-1.96 per cent) and Bank Muscat (-1.52 per cent).

MSM INDEX AND TURNOVER OF FIVE TRADING DAYS



Dubai issues \$2bn sukuk and bonds

Dubai, UAE - The Government of Dubai announced the successful completion of an issuance process consisting of ten-year Islamic sukuk of US\$1bn at a profit rate of 2.763 per cent and 30-year government bonds of US\$1bn at an interest of 3.90 per cent.

"We are satisfied with the success of Dubai in this issuance. Department of Finance (DoF) was able to obtain the lowest interest rate for thirty-year bonds and the lowest profit for ten-year sukuk in Dubai government history," confirmed Abdulrahman Saleh al Saleh, director general of DoF.

Rashed Ali bin Obood, head of investors affairs at DoF, said, "The value of the order book exceeded US\$10bn, five times more than the target value of the issuance. The strength of the order book as well as the diversity of the investor base reflect the strong confidence of international community in the resilience of the emirate's economy and the reaffirmation of superiority of Dubai's credit globally."

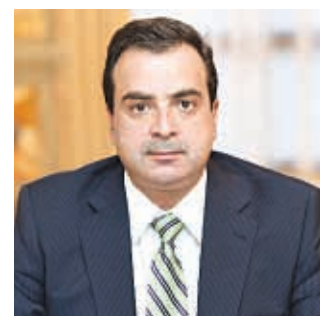
Global investors made up 84 per cent of the total investors in the long-term bond segment (30 years).

WAM

Apicorp posts \$55mn net profit in first half

Dammam, Saudi Arabia - The Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (Apicorp), a multi-lateral regional development financial institution, announced its half-year results for the six months ended June 30, 2020. Gross operating income for the period stood at US\$144.7mn while net profit reached US\$54.8mn. While down from the corresponding period last year at 20 per cent and 22 per cent, respectively, the net profit results are notable under the current market conditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and oil price fluctuations, Apicorp said in a press release.

Income from Apicorp's treasury and capital markets operations rose to US\$60.4mn, a 38 per cent increase compared to a year ago.



Ahmed Ali Attiga

Over the first six months period of 2020, Apicorp's balance sheet grew 10 per cent to reach US\$8.1bn, due in large part to the growth in the size of its treasury and capital markets portfolio.

Dr Ahmed Ali Attiga, CEO of Apicorp, said, "The results in the first six months of 2020 are a testament to the resilience of Apicorp in the face of a tough global business environment."

UBGCCF Inception Date*		17-Nov-09
NAV Date	Sep 03, 2020	
NAV (OMR)	0.973	
Adjusted NAV** (OMR)	1.284	
Cash Dividend paid since inception (OMR)	0.03	
Unit Dividend paid since inception	28%	
YTD Performance	(4.04)%	
Performance since inception	33.68%	

* First NAV was issued on 4th March 2010
** Adjusted for cash and bonus dividends

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China revs up its services trade

Beijing, China - China, the world's second-largest economy, has set its sights on services trade to stabilise foreign trade and power growth amid weaker global demand and economic headwinds.

Cutting-edge technologies such as driverless cars and all-in-one VR headsets are on display at the ongoing China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), which also includes exhibitions featuring financial services, cultural services, tourism, education and other fields.

As the first major international economic and trade event held both online and offline in China since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fair has attracted worldwide attention.

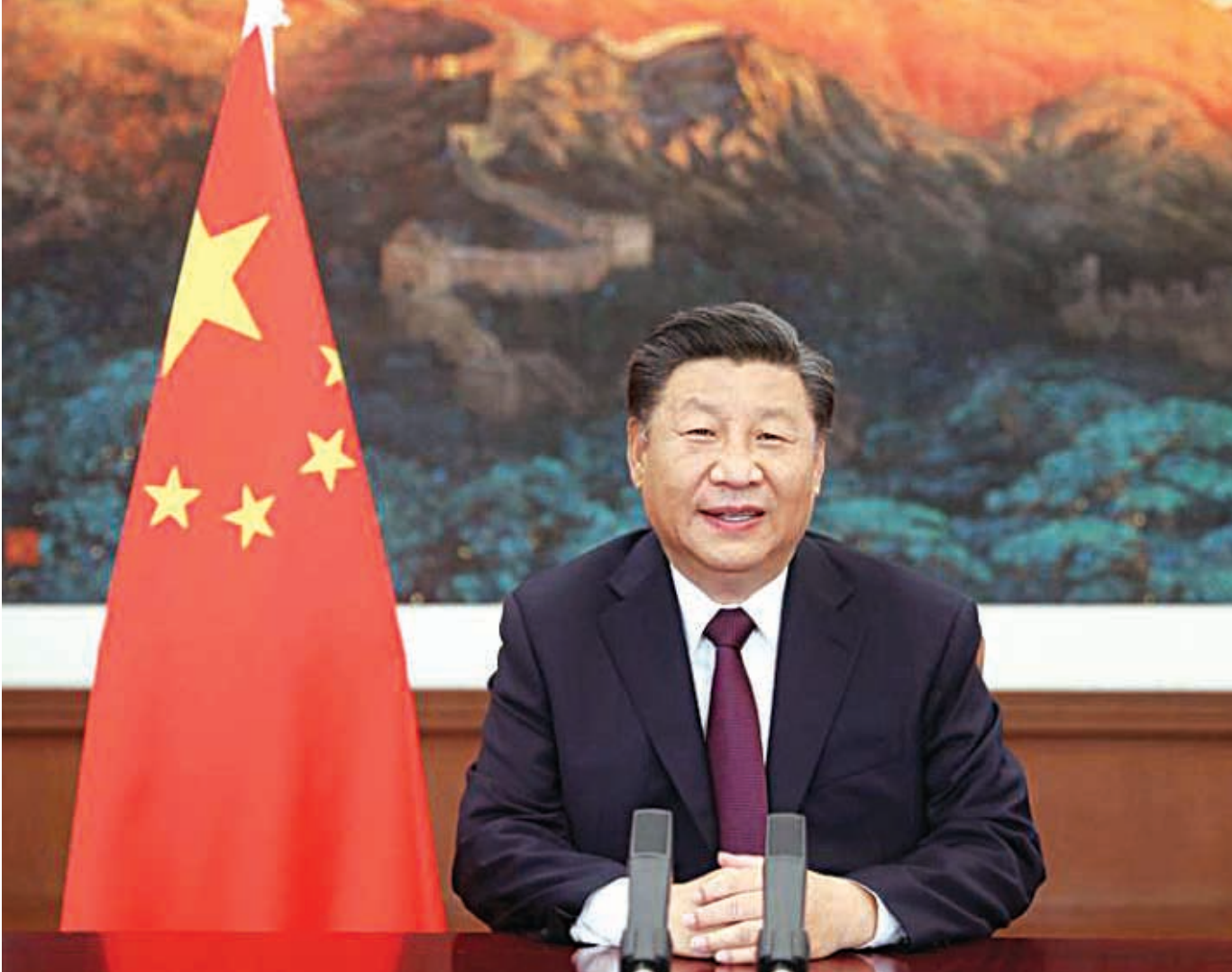
As of Thursday, 18,000 companies, 33 international organisations from 148 countries and regions, and 110 overseas trade associations had registered to take part in the event.

"Hosting the fair amid economic uncertainties demonstrates China's determination to open wider to the outside world and helps lift the global economy that has been dented by the COVID-19 pandemic and rising protectionist sentiment," said Yin Yong, vice mayor of Beijing.

New engine

For years, China has been forging ahead with efforts to transition from an economy driven by export and investment to one that is led by services and consumption.

"A thriving service sector plays a pivotal role in boosting employment, stabilising foreign trade and propelling economic growth," said Zhuang Rui, deputy



Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the Global Trade in Services Summit of the 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) via video on Friday (Xinhua)

dean of the Institute of International Economy under the University of International Business and Economics.

China's services trade has grown at an average annual rate of 7.8 per cent since 2012, 3.7 percentage points higher than the global growth rate. In 2019, China's international services trade totaled 5.42tn yuan (about US\$775.6bn), ranking second in the world for six consecutive years.

"Domestically, trade in serv-

ices has become a new engine powering the development of China's foreign trade. Globally, China is an important contributor to the growth of global trade in services," said Fan Shijie, deputy director of the Department of Trade in Services and Commercial Services of the Ministry of Commerce.

As China moves up the global value chain, services trade's share of total foreign trade will continue to rise, with the knowledge-intensive sub-sector lead-

ing the increases, Fan said.

As a staunch supporter of free trade, China has stepped up efforts to increase foreign access to its local service markets over recent years.

China removed foreign ownership limits in major parts of the financial industry last year. The implementation of the new foreign investment law, which took effect on January 1, also encouraged foreign companies to expand their businesses in the country.

China has rolled out trials for innovative development of trade in services in 15 provincial-level regions including Hainan and Shanghai. This year, the country will launch more comprehensive trials on opening up the service sector, Vice Commerce Minister Wang Bingnan said last week.

As the world's second-biggest importer of services, China plans to import more than US\$10tn of services over the next 15 years, Wang said.

Xinhua

Xi weighs in on early recovery of global economy

Beijing, China - Chinese President Xi Jinping called for joint efforts to overcome difficulties to promote the development and prosperity of global trade in services and push for global economic recovery as early as possible.

He made the remarks while addressing the Global Trade in Services Summit of the 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) via video, underlining the need to boost global cooperation amid challenges.

"Today, with COVID-19 yet to be brought under full control at the global level, all countries face the formidable task to defeat the virus, stabilise the economy, and protect livelihoods," he said.

"It is against such a backdrop that China decided to hold this important international trade event despite many difficulties in preparation. It shows China's willingness to join hands with all of you in this trying time and work together to enable global trade in services to thrive and the world economy to recover at an early date," he said.

Calling the open cooperation in the service sector 'an increasingly important driver for development', he made three proposals.

Firstly, all countries should

jointly foster an open and inclusive environment for cooperation, Xi said.

China will stay committed to further opening up, with measures including the establishment of a sound negative list management system in cross-border service trade, and the advancement of constructing open platforms for piloting innovative development of trade in services, Xi said.

The country will also continue to ease market access in the service sector and actively expand imports of quality services, he said.

Secondly, all countries should work together to invigorate momentum for cooperation driven by innovation.

China will work with all countries in enhancing the protection of intellectual property rights and actively promote the development of digital economy and sharing economy, Xi said.

Thirdly, Xi called for joint efforts to break new ground in win-win cooperation.

All countries should strengthen coordination in their development of trade in services, innovate the ways of cooperation, deepen the areas of cooperation and seek to maximise common interests in development..

Xinhua

Britain won't be EU 'client state': UK Brexit envoy



David Frost

London, US - Britain will not become 'a client state' under the terms of any post-Brexit trade deal struck with the European Union, the UK's chief negotiator David Frost insisted late on Saturday.

Ahead of an eighth and final round of scheduled talks with the EU this week, Frost said Britain was 'not going to compromise on the fundamentals of having control over our own laws'.

"We are not going to be a client state," he told the *Mail* on Sunday, as the stalled negotiations with the bloc near their conclusion.

"We are not going to accept provisions that give them control over our money or the way we can organise things here in the UK and that should not be controversial," Frost added.

"That's what being an independent country is about, that's what the British people voted for and that's what will happen at the end of the year, come what may."

Britain formally left the EU in January, nearly four years after a landmark referendum to end al-

most 50 years of European integration.

But it remains bound by EU rules until the end of this year as both sides try to thrash out the terms of their future relationship.

The talks have become gridlocked over several issues, including so-called level playing field provisions and state aid as well as fisheries.

Time is running out for both sides to reach an agreement, given the need for the deal and legal texts to be scrutinised by member states and ratified by the European parliament.

The deadlock has heightened fears of a no-deal Brexit after December 31, when much of the trade between Britain and the bloc could revert to World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules and tariffs.

However, Frost insisted Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his senior ministers are not 'scared' of such a scenario. "If we can reach an agreement that regulates trade like Canada's, great. If we can't, it will be an Australian-like trading agreement and we are fully ready for that," he said.

Referring to several years of prior negotiations, Frost said the previous UK government 'had blinked and had its bluff called at critical moments' during Brexit talks - a mistake they would not be making.

"A lot of what we are trying to do this year is to get them to realise that we mean what we say and they should take our position seriously," he added.

AFP

US needs \$1.8bn to replace Huawei, ZTE parts

San Francisco, US - US regulators estimated on Friday that it could cost small telecoms firms more than US\$1.8bn to remove and replace Huawei and ZTE gear flagged over security concerns.

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has classified the Chinese tech giants as national security threats and carriers are barred from using the

Universal Service Fund to buy their equipment.

An FCC assessment of how much networks supported by the federal fund rely on hardware and services from Huawei and ZTE estimated that a purge could cost US\$1.84bn in total.

"I once again strongly urge Congress to appropriate funding to reimburse carriers for replacing any equipment or services

determined to be a national security threat so that we can protect our networks and the myriad parts of our economy and society that rely upon them," FCC chairman Ajit Pai said in a statement.

Huawei is one of the few companies capable of building 5G networks and is widely viewed as providing the most advanced option for the super-fast data transfers behind technologies such as

self-driving cars.

Verizon, which was among the examples listed in the FCC assessment, is spending US\$1.9bn to speed up its deployment 5G telecom services as a top bidder for licenses to valuable spectrum useful for 5G.

Mid-bandwidth made available by the FCC strikes a balance between how far signals reach and how fast data travels, with

low-bandwidth sacrificing speed for distance and high-bandwidth quick but short-ranged.

5G networks are touted as promising an exponential leap in the amount and speed of wireless data, enabling advances in self-driving vehicles, virtual reality, connected health and more as sensors and servers communicate instantly.

AFP

Pandemic worsens American inequality, says Fed chair



Jerome Powell (AFP)

Washington, US - Poor Americans are bearing the brunt of the US coronavirus downturn and may also take longer to recover, Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell said on Friday.

"Without question, this event has exacerbated really pre-existing disparities in our economy that were already troubling," Powell said in an interview with

National Public Radio.

He said help should be given to people who have lost their livelihoods due to COVID-19 through no fault of their own - comments that come amid an impasse in Washington over a new aid package to offset the economic damage from the virus. "The burdens of the pandemic have fallen to a greater ex-

tent on people at the low end of the income spectrum," Powell said, especially low-wage employees who rent and have little savings, who are 'very vulnerable to an extended period of unemployment'.

"I think it really does behoove us as a country, as a very wealthy country, to use our great powers to support people who did nothing wrong," he said.

The Fed chair specifically raised concerns about families facing the loss of their homes, telling the broadcaster, "We shouldn't let those people lose everything they have and have to move out or be evicted."

"It could have significant macroeconomic effects over time. But it's also just the right thing to do."

Labor Department data released earlier in the day showed the world's largest economy added 1.4mn new jobs in August and the unemployment rate dropped to 8.4 per cent.

AFP

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ISRAEL-ARAB RECONCILIATION

Hezbollah, Hamas chiefs meet to discuss Israel-Arab growing ties

Beirut, Lebanon - Leaders of Lebanon's Hezbollah and the Palestinian Hamas movement, both rivals of Israel, have met to discuss diplomatic normalisation between the Jewish state and Arab countries.

They stressed the 'stability' of the 'axis of resistance' against Israel, the Hezbollah-run Al-Manar TV channel reported on Sunday, without saying where or when the meeting took place.

Hassan Nasrallah, head of the Iran-backed Shiite Hezbollah movement, was pictured meeting Ismail Haniyeh, who heads the political bureau of Hamas, the Islamist movement that control the Gaza Strip.

They discussed 'political and military developments in Palestine, Lebanon and the region' and 'the dangers to the Palestinian cause' including 'Arab plans for normalisation' with Israel, Al-Manar said. The meeting comes after an August 13 announcement that the Jewish state and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to normalise ties.

While the US-backed diplomatic drive aims to boost a re-



This handout photo released by the Hezbollah press office on Sunday shows Hassan Nasrallah (right), the head of Lebanon's militant Shiite movement Hezbollah, meeting with Hamas' political bureau chief Ismail Haniya (left) at an undisclosed location (AFP)

gional alliance against Iran, Palestinians have condemned it as a 'stab in the back' as they remain under occupation and don't have their own state.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said his country is in talks with other Arab and Muslim leaders now about normalising relations, fol-

The meeting comes after an August 13 announcement that the Jewish state and the UAE have agreed to normalise ties

lowing the deals with UAE and, decades ago, Egypt and Jordan.

Haniyeh has been in Lebanon since Wednesday, on his first visit to the country in nearly 30 years, for direct and video-conference talks with other Palestinian groups that oppose Israel's diplomatic initiative.

Israel has in recent weeks tar-

geted Hamas in the Gaza Strip and what it says have been Hezbollah gunmen along its border with Lebanon. It also regularly launches airstrikes in Syria against what it says are Hezbollah and other pro-Iranian militants fighting on the side of President Bashar Assad's regime.

AFP

Turkey 'disappointed' by Kosovo's move

Istanbul, Turkey - Turkey on Sunday voiced disappointment over Kosovo's decision to recognise Israel and set up its mission in Jerusalem.

A vocal advocate of the Palestinian cause, Turkey became one of the first countries to recognise Kosovo, which declared its independence from Serbia in 2008.

'Even the thought by Kosovo officials of taking such a step - which is a clear violation of international law - is disappointing,' the Turkish Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The ministry called on the Kosovo leadership to avoid such steps that would harm the legal status of Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Friday Serbia will become the first European country to transfer its Embassy to

Jerusalem.

Kosovo will also set up its Israel mission in Jerusalem and in exchange earn Israel's recognition, as it seeks to further legitimise its statehood.

Those decisions came out of a US-brokered agreement between the two Balkan rivals.

In a separate statement late on Saturday, the Turkish Foreign Ministry said it was also 'deeply concerned' by Serbia's move.

Israel seized control of East Jerusalem in 1967 and later annexed it in moves never recognised by the international community.

The US in December 2017 recognised Jerusalem as Israel's capital and shifted its Embassy from Tel Aviv to the city.

AFP

Egypt accused of 'recycling' judicial cases

Cairo, Egypt - Egyptian human rights groups on Saturday accused the authorities of 'recycling' judicial cases against dissidents to prolong their periods of detention.

'Recycling cases occur when a new case is brought by the prosecution against someone who has already been released for another case or is still serving a previous sentence, often times in pre-trial detention,' the six groups said in a joint statement.

Pre-trial detention can last up to two years under Egyptian law, but the period is often extended.

'The new cases are in effect simply revived or renewed versions of the old cases against the defendants,' the groups said.

They called for prosecutors to 'carry out their roles in investigation and collecting evidence, instead of relying on state security investigations'. The groups pointed to a specific case of defendants being re-tried on new charges while in jail or when they were about to be released.

A prominent detainee in the case, along with several activists and journalists, is award-winning human rights lawyer Mahienour el Massry, who was arrested in September 2019 charged with joining a 'terror group'.

On August 31, investigators

charged her on the very same accusation, effectively extending her detention.

'State security authorities in Egypt routinely and relentlessly apply this practice of 'recycling cases' or 'renewed arbitrary arrest' ... as soon as a decision to release them (dissidents) is issued or before the legal period for their pre-trial detention has expired,' the groups said.

In a 2019 interview with the

Recycling cases occur when a new case is brought by the prosecution against someone who has already been released

US television programme 60 Minutes, President Abdel Fattah al Sisi said no political prisoners were held in Egyptian jails.

According to several NGOs, however, an estimated 60,000 detainees in Egypt are political prisoners. They include secular activists, journalists, lawyers, academics and Islamists arrested in a crackdown on dissent ever since the army's 2013 ouster of late president Mohamed Morsi.

AFP

Tunisian officer stabbed to death, three 'terrorists' killed in firefight

Sousse, Tunisia - Attackers with knives killed a Tunisian National Guard officer and wounded another on Sunday before three assailants were shot dead in a firefight, the security force said, labelling it a 'terrorist' act.

The attack took place in the tourist district of the coastal city of Sousse, the site of the worst of several extremist attacks in recent years, where 38 people, most of them Britons, were killed in a 2015 beachside shooting rampage.

"A patrol of two National Guard officers was attacked with a knife in the centre of Sousse [140km south of the capital Tunis]," said National Guard spokesman Houcem Eddine Jebabli.

"One died as a martyr and the other was wounded and is hospitalised," he said, adding that 'this was a terrorist attack'.

The attackers had first rammed the officers of the national gendarmerie with a vehicle, said the interior ministry in a statement.

After the knife attack, security forces pursued the assailants, who had taken the officers'uda district of the city's tourist area of El-Kantaoui, said Jebabli.

"In a firefight three terrorists were killed," he said, adding that security forces 'managed to recover' the car and two pistols the



Tunisian forensic police investigate the site of an attack on Tunisian National Guard officers, in Sousse - south of the capital Tunis - on Sunday (AFP)

assailants had stolen.

British Ambassador to Tunisia Louise de Sousa tweeted she was 'appalled to hear of the attack on a National Guard patrol in #Sousse this morning'.

'My sincere condolences to the family of the murdered officer & I wish a swift recovery to

the injured. #UKsupportTunisia'.

Tunisia, since its 2011 popular revolution, has been hit by a string of extremist attacks that have killed dozens of security personnel, civilians and foreign tourists.

A suicide attack against security forces protecting the US Em-

bassy in Tunis killed a Tunisian police officer and left several others wounded in March.

Year 2015 was a particularly bloody year, with three major deadly attacks claimed by the Islamic State group.

An attack at the capital's Bardo museum in March killed 21

foreign tourists and a security guard.

Just three months later, the 38 tourists were killed in the shooting rampage at Sousse.

And that November, a bomb blast on a bus in central Tunis killed 12 presidential guards.

While the situation has significantly improved since then, Tunisia has maintained a state of emergency. Assaults on security forces have persisted, mainly in remote areas along the border with Algeria.

Tunisia has been praised as a rare success story among the 2011 Arab Spring popular uprisings that swept the region and brought down many autocrats, among them Tunisia's long-time president Zine el Abidine Ben Ali.

But the small Mediterranean country of about 11mn people is mired in an economic crisis, with the official unemployment rate at 18 per cent, and in need of new assistance from the International Monetary Fund.

Last week Tunisia's parliament approved a new technocratic government led by Prime Minister Hichem Mechichi which faces the task of tackling deep social and economic woes in the North African country.

The 46 year old Prime Minister pledged to revitalise the economy expeditiously.

AFP

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German Foreign Minister threatens sanctions over Alexei Navalny poisoning



This file photo shows a German army ambulance presumably carrying Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny arriving to Berlin's Charite hospital, on August 22 (AFP)

Berlin, Germany - Tensions deepened between Germany and Russia over the alleged poisoning of opposition figure Alexei Navalny on Sunday, with Germany threatening sanctions and Russia accusing Berlin of delaying the investigation it demanded.

Russian opposition leader and anti-corruption campaigner Navalny fell ill on a flight last month and was treated in a Siberian hospital before being evacuated to Berlin.

Germany said last week there was 'unequivocal evidence' that President Vladimir Putin's top foe had been poisoned using the Soviet-era nerve agent Novichok.

Germany, which holds the rotating presidency of the European Union, will discuss possible sanctions against Russia if the Kremlin does not provide an explanation soon, Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Sunday.

'We have high expectations of the Russian government to solve this serious crime,' Maas told German daily *Bild*. 'If the government has nothing to do with the attack, then it is in its own interest to back this up with facts.'

If Russia does not help clarify what happened 'in the coming days', Germany will be compelled to 'discuss a response with our allies', Maas said.

Any sanctions decided should be 'targeted', he added.

Western leaders and many

Russian state link likely in Navalny poisoning, says UK

London, UK - Britain on Sunday said Russia had 'a very serious set of questions to answer' about the poisoning of Navalny, suggesting some form of state involvement in the high-profile case.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said it was 'clear' the Kremlin critic was poisoned with the Soviet-era nerve agent

Novichok, which was previously used in an attack against a Russian former double agent in Salisbury, southwest England, in 2018. Germany, where Navalny is being treated after falling ill last month, has said there was "unequivocal evidence" of the use of the agent but Moscow has said there was no proof of poisoning.

"It's very difficult, when it comes to the question of attribution, to think of a plausible explanation of being anyone other than some emanation of the Russian state, simply because Novichok is hard to get your hands on, hard to control," Raab told Sky News television.

AFP

this poison was used by Russian secret services in the attack against former agent Sergei Skripal,' he said, referring to a 2018 attack on the former double agent and his daughter in the English city of Salisbury.

Nord Stream 2

On the subject of which sanctions could be discussed by the EU, Maas did not rule out action relating to Nord Stream 2, a multi-billion-euro Russian-German gas pipeline nearing completion that has drawn the ire of US and European partners alike.

"I hope... that the Russians do not force us to change our position on Nord Stream," Maas said, adding that the consequences of any potential cancellation would also need to be weighed while the debate on sanctions should not be 'reduced' to one point.

The controversial pipeline is meant to deliver Russian gas to Europe, but the German government has faced growing calls to abandon it as tensions with Russia escalate.

Some politicians, including Chancellor Angela Merkel's longtime rival Friedrich Merz and foreign affairs committee chair Norbert Roettgen, have called for the pipeline to be stopped.

Roettgen said the project was simply 'encouraging Putin' to 'continue his policy'.

AFP

We have high expectations of the Russian government to solve this serious crime

HEIKO MAAS

Russians have expressed horror at what Navalny's allies say is the first known use of chemical weapons against a high-profile opposition leader on Russian soil.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell last week called on Moscow to cooperate with an international probe into the poisoning and said the 27-nation

bloc would not rule out sanctions.

The Kremlin has denied responsibility for the attack and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said that Germany is yet to share any findings with Moscow's prosecutors.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova on Sunday accused Germany of stalling efforts to probe the case.

German authorities had failed to respond to a request by Russian prosecutors sent on August 27, she said in a Facebook post.

'Dear Mr Maas, if the German government is sincere in its statements then it should be interested in preparing a response to a request of the Russian Pros-

ecutor General's Office as soon as possible,' Zakharova said.

'So far we are not certain that Germany is not playing a double game,' she added. 'Where is the 'urgency' you are insisting upon?' 'By not sending its answer, Berlin is stalling the process of investigation for which it's calling. On purpose?'

Maas said on Sunday there were 'several indications' that Russia was behind the poisoning, in the strongest accusations yet from Germany.

'The deadly substance with which Navalny was poisoned has in the past been found in the hands of Russian authorities.'

'Only a small number of people have access to Novichok and



Belarus opposition supporters attend a rally to protest against the disputed August 9 presidential elections results in Minsk on Sunday (AFP)

Belarusians protest against strongman

Minsk, Belarus - Tens of thousands of Belarusian protesters marched in the capital Minsk on Sunday despite authorities arresting demonstrators and deploying armoured personnel carriers and water cannon.

Protesters from all walks of life, from students to Catholic priests, came out on to the streets, an AFP correspondent reported from the scene.

Many held red-and-white flags and placards while a band beat drums and played other instruments.

Thousands of Belarusians kept the pressure on strongman Alexander Lukashenko who has refused to quit after his disputed re-election and turned to Russia for help to stay in power.

Holding red-and-white flags and placards, protesters including many students took to the streets of the capital Minsk despite authorities mounting a massive show of force and detaining some demonstrators.

Troops, water cannon, armoured personnel carriers and

armoured reconnaissance vehicles were deployed to the city centre ahead of the march and metro stations in Minsk's centre were closed.

Unprecedented protests broke out after Lukashenko, who has ruled the ex-Soviet state for 26 years, claimed re-election with 80 per cent of the vote on August 9.

Opposition rival Svetlana Tikhonovskaya says she won the vote but Lukashenko's security forces have detained thousands of protesters, many of whom accused police of beatings and torture. Several people have died in the crackdown.

Tikhonovskaya left Belarus under pressure from authorities and took shelter in EU member Lithuania.

Belarusians have been demonstrating across the country for nearly a month even though the protest movement lacks a clear leader, with many activists jailed or forced out of the country.

AFP

Dozens rescued from wildfire in California

Los Angeles, US - Dozens of people were airlifted to safety on Saturday night after being trapped by a wildfire near a popular reservoir in northern California, officials said.

Military helicopters have so far rescued 63 people from the Mammoth Pool Reservoir in the Sierra National Forest, about 70km northeast of Fresno, the Fresno Fire Department said on Twitter. Two were severely injured and ten had moderate injuries, it said. 'Aircraft are returning to continue rescue operations. Unknown how many more,' the fire department said.

Madera County Sheriff's Office said around 150 were trapped at the popular reservoir.

'Emergency crews from multiple agencies need to focus on the critical task at hand - rescue of the approximately 150 people sheltering-in-place at Mammoth Pool Boat Launch,' the sheriff's office said on Facebook, warning people to avoid the area.

California National Guard was using Chinooks in the rescue operation, National Guard Bureau chief General Daniel Hokanson said, tweeting a picture taken from the cockpit of a helicopter showing it surrounded by blazing trees. He said dozens rescued had been brought to California National Guard facilities and were met by military medics and civilian first responders.

AFP

UK police arrests nine after clashes at port city anti-migrant rally

Dover, UK - British police arrested nine people on Saturday in the Channel port city of Dover after clashes with anti-immigration activists.

The arrests followed dozens of demonstrators blocking a four-lane road near Dover, and as pro-migrant protesters held their own rally in the southeast English city.

The incidents come as the number of migrants crossing the Straits of Dover - which is 33.8km at the closest point - in small inflatable boats has spiralled over the summer.

'Officers have made nine arrests during today's protests in #Dover, including for racially aggravated public order, violent disorder and assaulting

an emergency worker,' Kent police said on Twitter.

'Enquiries are ongoing to identify any further offences,' Kent police said.

Footage posted on social media showed officers scuffling with several anti-migrant activists as they made arrests near Dover's busy harbour.

Many protesters wore Union Jack flag face masks and carried banners decrying illegal immigration across the Channel to Britain.

Some shouted 'England till I die' and sang the popular patriotic song 'Rule, Britannia!'.

The group of several dozen demonstrators, thought to have come from far beyond Dover, gathered after record numbers of migrants have tried to cross the



An anti-immigration protester holds up a placard during a demonstration in Dover, on Saturday (AFP)

Channel this week in the small boats.

Tuesday saw more than 400 migrants make the dangerous journey across the world's busiest shipping lane - thought to be a record for a single day.

Meanwhile, nearly 1,500 migrants and asylum-seekers arrived in Britain by small boats in August, according to an analysis by the domestic Press Association news agency.

Around 100 people attended the earlier protest in support of asylum-seekers and refugees.

"We are standing up and welcoming people who are in desperate circumstances fleeing from awful situations," said Peter Keenan, from the Kent Refugee Help group.

AFP

Teargas, fire bombs as police force declares Portland protest a ‘riot’

Portland, US - Police arrested dozens of people and used tear gas against hundreds of demonstrators in Portland late on Saturday as the western US city marked 100 days since Black Lives Matter protests erupted against racism and police brutality.

Police quickly declared the rally a ‘riot’ after protesters hurled Molotov cocktails at them, and they responded with a barrage of tear gas to disperse the crowd.

At least one person was injured by the fire bombs, police said.

Officers arrested dozens of protesters in an ensuing game of cat-and-mouse through a residential district of east Portland.

“It was Day 100 for Black Lives Matter protests in Portland since George Floyd’s murder and they wanted to prevent us from marching,” said 20 year old protester Jay, her eyes red from the tear gas.

“It’s our constitutional right to be here and to express ourselves.”

Police said people were ‘engaging in tumultuous and violent conduct thereby intentionally or recklessly creating a grave risk of causing public alarm’.

‘This is a riot. Police are giving announcements to disperse. People are throwing Molotov cocktails,’ Portland Police said on Twitter.

The nightly protests were sparked by the death of George Floyd while in police custody in Minneapolis in May.

Floyd’s death triggered similar



A protester, whose feet caught fire after a molotov cocktail exploded on him, runs toward a medic during a protest against police brutality and racial injustice, in Portland in the US state of Oregon, on Saturday (AFP)

protests nationwide, but it is in Portland - a city of 650,000 that is more than 70 per cent white - that activists have remained on the streets practically every night, demanding racial justice and police accountability.

President Donald Trump has cast the city as being under siege by ‘thugs’ engaged in ‘domestic terrorism’.

Tensions escalated again last

weekend after a man identified as a supporter of a rightwing group was shot and killed.

Memorial for shooting victim

Earlier on Saturday, hundreds of people gathered in a park near Portland in a memorial for Aaron ‘Jay’ Danielson, a supporter of the far-right group Patriot Prayer. The 39 year old was fatally

shot after he joined pro-Trump supporters who descended on Portland, sparking confrontations with Black Lives Matter counter-protesters.

The suspect in the shooting, Michael Reinhoehl (48) was killed in neighbouring Washington state as police tried to arrest him.

The circumstances of Danielson’s death are still under investigation but Reinhoehl appeared to

acknowledge shooting him in an interview with Vice News.

“We are in the midst of a civil war between good and evil, the good, the good is all the folks you see here,” said Dann (50), who knew Danielson through Patriot Prayer, pointing to the families lined up near an imposing barbecue among camping chairs and numerous American flags displayed for the occasion.

Hurts to breathe, Blake says in video

Washington, US - Jacob Blake, the young black man shot in the back multiple times by a white police officer in Wisconsin, said ‘it hurts to breathe’ and that he was in constant pain in a video message from his hospital bed.

Despite his injuries, which will likely leave him paralysed from the waist down, Blake told his supporters ‘there’s a lot more life to live’.

“Your life, and not only just your life, your legs - something that you need to move around and forward in life - can be taken from you like this, man,” Blake said, snapping his fingers, in the video released on Saturday by his lawyer Ben Crump.

Wearing a hospital gown, Blake said he had staples in his back and stomach.

“Twenty-four hours, every

24 hours it’s pain, it’s nothing but pain,” he said.

“It hurts to breathe, it hurts to sleep, it hurts to move from side-to-side, it hurts to eat,” he said in the video, which has more than 400,000 views on Twitter.

“Please, I’m telling you, change your lives out there. We can stick together, make some money, make everything easier for our people out there, man, because there’s so much time that’s been wasted.”

The 29 year old was gravely wounded when a policeman fired seven or eight shots at him as he tried to get into his car on August 23 in Kenosha, in the Midwestern state of Wisconsin.

Three of his children were in the car at the time.

AFP

Hong Kong police swoops on poll protests

Hong Kong, China - Nearly 100 people were arrested by Hong Kong police on Sunday as riot officers swooped on democracy protesters opposed to the postponement of local elections.

Sunday was meant to be voting day for the city’s partially elected legislature, one of the few instances where Hong Kongers get to cast ballots.

But the city’s pro-Beijing leader Carrie Lam suspended the polls for a year - citing the coronavirus - angering the pro-democracy opposition who had been hoping to capitalise on seething anti-government sentiment.

Hundreds of riot police flooded the district of Kowloon in a bid to thwart online calls for flash mob protests to mark the suspended vote.

Throughout the afternoon police were heckled by people shouting slogans such as ‘Give me back my vote!’ and ‘Corrupt



Protesters stand along a wall as police personnel patrol the area after a rally was organised to protest against the decision to postpone the legislative council election due to the COVID-19, in Hong Kong on Sunday (AFP)

cops!’ as officers conducted multiple stop and searches and ordered crowds to disperse. In a Facebook statement, police said at least 90 people were arrested,

mostly for unlawful assembly.

One woman was detained under a new security law Beijing imposed on the city for chanting independence slogans, the force

added.

Live images showed three prominent pro-democracy politicians - Leung Kwok-hung, Figo Chan and Raphael Wong - were

among those held.

The protests came hours after the police’s newly formed national security unit arrested Tam Tak-chi, another democracy activist and radio DJ, for ‘uttering seditious words’ - a colonial-era offence. Tam is the latest in a long line of government critics to find themselves facing prosecution in recent months for their involvement in protests.

When they announced the arrest on Sunday morning, police did not explain what Tam may have said that was considered seditious.

Hong Kong government condemned the protesters’ ‘unlawful and selfish acts’ in a statement issued on Sunday evening.

“The first priority for Hong Kong currently is to unite as one and fight the virus together with concentrated resources,” a government spokesperson said.

AFP



Police forensics officers gather evidence inside a cordon on Hurst Street, following a major stabbing incident, in Birmingham on Sunday (AFP)

UK police begins murder probe after stabbing

Birmingham, UK - One man was killed and two people were critically injured during a ‘random’ stabbing attack lasting several hours in Britain’s second city of Birmingham, police said on Sunday.

Detectives said they were hunting one suspect after being called to reports of stabbings at four separate locations in the city centre between 12.30am and 2.30am.

But they ruled out hate crime, gang violence and terrorism.

“It does appear to be random in terms of the people that were attacked,” said Chief Superintendent Steve Graham of West Midlands Police, adding that it was being treated as homicide.

Britain has been on high alert after two mass stabbings in London in the last year, which saw both perpetrators - convicted extremists released early from prison - shot dead by armed offi-

cers. In June, a man was charged with murder after three people were killed in a park in Reading, west of London, in an attack investigated by counter-terrorism police.

Six people were then injured, including a police officer, at a hotel housing asylum seekers in the Scottish city of Glasgow. Armed police shot dead the suspected attacker.

The latest incident comes amid concern about levels of knife crime in Britain, particularly in the capital, London.

The number of stabbings in England and Wales increased six percent in the year to the end of March, according to the Office for National Statistics.

Birmingham is one of Britain’s most ethnically diverse cities with a population of more than one million, and has had an explosive recent history of gang violence.

AFP

Blaze extinguished on stricken tanker off Sri Lanka

Colombo, Sri Lanka - A massive fire on a stricken oil tanker off Sri Lanka’s coast has been extinguished, the island nation’s navy said on Sunday, as international salvage experts began to assess the damage over fears of an environmental disaster if there is a leak.

The Panamanian-registered New Diamond, carrying over 270,000 tonnes of crude and diesel, was en-route from Kuwait to the Indian port of Paradip when it issued a distress call on Thursday after an engine room explosion that killed a Filipino crew member.

Sri Lanka’s navy chief Nishantha Ulugetenna said the fire on



This handout photo taken on Friday shows fireboats battling to extinguish a fire on a crude oil tanker some 60km off Sri Lanka’s coast (AFP)

the tanker, which the navy chief and the Indian coastguard got under control on Friday - had fi-

nally been put out.

“The fire has been completely doused,” the Vice Admiral told

reporters in Colombo. “The tanker’s (steel) plates are still very hot so there is a risk of re-ignition of new fires.”

The Indian coastguard tweeted that ‘no flame & smoke’ was visible from the vessel.

The announcement came as Sri Lanka’s Disaster Management Centre said foreign salvage experts and insurance assessors had started examining the ship some 75km from the coast.

Ten British and Netherlands professionals with expertise in rescue operations, disaster evaluation and legal consultation arrived earlier on Sunday, the navy said. Dutch firm Smit Salvage had commissioned the experts

and was also sending two tug boats from Singapore and Mauritius, the navy added.

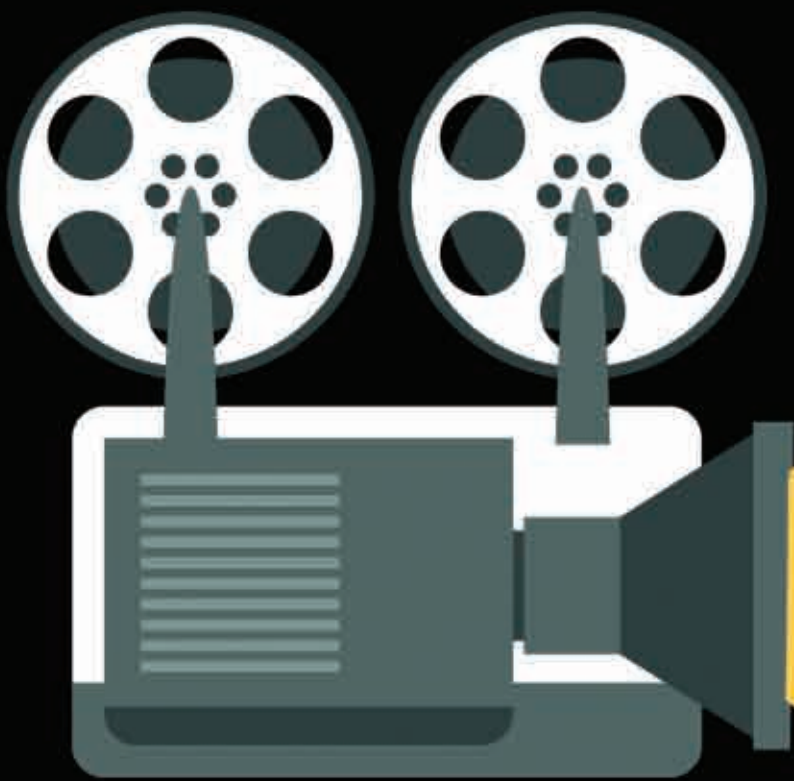
The Indian coastguard, which deployed six ships, an aircraft and a helicopter, added on Sunday that its pollution control vessel had arrived at the site in the Indian Ocean.

The rescue vessels are still dousing the tanker with water to prevent fresh fires being ignited in heavy winds lashing the hot steel plates near the burnt engine room. The tanker had suffered a crack of its hull some 10m above the waterline as a result of intense heat from the fire, officials said.

AFP

ENJOY A BACKYARD MOVIE NIGHT

Set up the ambience and the mood, stock up on popcorn and soft-drinks, settle for an evening of fun



So what if the cinemas are closed, you still can enjoy a cinema experience in your own backyard or even in a special room created to give you the same feel. Backyard movie nights are trending in summer 2020 and people have been substituting their inability to visit movie theatres by creating fun experiences for themselves within their homes.

Whether you want a romantic evening with your partner or a fun activity for all family members, backyard movie nights are a great option that can be planned again and again. To create the ultimate movie night, you need a few essentials. Consider these few steps to get ready for a season of cinema fun:

THE SCREEN

To help everyone enjoy a great view, you'll want a screen as the centrepiece of the event. The cheapest option is to iron and hang a white bed sheet. However, to get a better quality viewing experience, consider buying white blackout fabric from your local craft store. Of course, if you are serious about your outdoor movie nights, you may want to invest in an outdoor projection screen that rolls up and can be stored after each event.

THE PROJECTOR

If you wish to have frequent screenings of your favourite movies in your backyard, it's worthwhile to invest in a good projector for the best experience, year after year. Visit the gadget stores in town and get a good deal to suit your pocket. Some brands offer a small size projector with big impact to give

you a rich picture quality in HD resolution.

SEATING

Set up seating to allow everyone a good view of the screen. The majlis format with blankets and pillows/cushions is perfect and very popular with children. The back row can include folding chairs or lawn furniture for adults who like to sit up. If inviting other family members who don't live with you, ensure adequate social distancing in seating and interaction. It's also a good idea to offer everyone a face mask with a common theme or logo to add some fun to the mood of the evening.

REFRESHMENTS

No movie experience is complete without favourite treats. You can buy popcorn and favourite soft-drinks, and serve them in movie style cardboard pouches. You may also set up a counter with snacks, coffee and soft-drinks in tetra-packs for people to help themselves. A recess for snacking midway would also be helpful for people to ease their limbs.

LIGHTING

The best time for an outdoor movie is after sunset. However, you might want to add some light for safety and convenience. String lights are an affordable way to light pathways back to the house or around landscaping. Additionally, small flashlights for guests are a great option.

INFORM NEIGHBOURS

If you want your movie night to be a positive experience for everyone, make sure not to disturb neighbours. Ensure that your screening area does not interfere with the privacy of others residing in the vicinity of your home. It's a good idea to inform your neighbours and even invite them to join in. Also, keep sound at a reasonable level and select movies that have appropriate language and content for everyone.



KEEP ACNE AT BAY

Hubert Vaz

Summertime, sweaty skin, exposure to dirt and dust, as well as stress, can often make one an ideal subject for acne of varied types. And, if one is genetically disposed too, then the outcome may not be something you like to see in the mirror.

They say, if there's one thing common among teenagers around the world, its acne. And, if your parents had acne during their teenage, the chances of you being genetically disposed to acquiring it can be high. But, it's not something to worry about, since worry can actually worsen the condition.

According to Dr Ana María Anido Serrano, consultant dermatologist, co-CEO and medical director, Sandiane Dermatology Cosmetology & Laser Centre, "Acne is a chronic, inflammatory skin condition that involves the oil glands at the base of hair follicles and causes spots and pimples, especially on the face, shoulders, back, neck, chest, and upper arms. Whiteheads, blackheads, pimples, cysts, and nodules are all types of acne lesions. It commonly occurs during puberty when the sebaceous glands activate, but it can occur at any age (mainly 12 -24 years)."

Pointing out that acne is not 'dangerous' but can leave skin scars and affect the psychological status of the patient, she noted that, in some cases, presence of acne on facial skin can affect the quality of life.

She explained that the glands produce oil and are stimulated by androgen hormones produced by the adrenal glands in both, males and females, and that treatment depends on how severe and persistent it is.

"The risk factors may include genetics, hormonal changes, anxiety and stress, hot and humid climates, use of oil-based makeup, etc," she said, adding, "The role of sugar and fatty foods triggering acne has not been scientifically proven but one should try to avoid junk foods, chocolates and fatty foods."

DOs

- Do look for cleansers with either alpha hydroxy acids (lactic or glycolic) or beta hydroxy acids (salicylic), or even better, a combination of the two.
- Do use mineral makeup.
- Do see a dermatologist if your skin doesn't respond to over the counter products.
- Do wait for 20 to 30 minutes after washing your face to apply acne creams.
- Do apply topical acne medications to the entire problem area, not just the zits you have now.
- Do moisturise every day.
- Do try some tea tree oil on your skin.
- Do gentle facials formulated for acne-prone skin once a month.
- Add more fruits and vegetables to your diet.
- Drink plenty of water, at least 2-3 litres daily.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle.

DON'Ts

- Don't wash your face too much.
- Don't use exfoliating scrubs too often because they can irritate inflamed skin, causing tiny tears.
- Don't pick, pop, squeeze, or otherwise mess with your skin.
- Don't overmedicate.
- Don't get too much exposure to sunlight.
- Don't go to bed without removing your make-up.
- Don't have junk food, fatty foods and chocolates.



“
Acne is a chronic, inflammatory skin condition that involves the oil glands at the base of hair follicles and causes spots and pimples.
DR ANA MARÍA ANIDO SERRANO



Make-up ingredients to avoid

If you are prone to getting acne, it is better to use creams and make-up items that do not contain these ingredients:



Essential oils

Avoid products with ingredients like essential oils and natural fragrance, in addition to synthetic perfumes. Essential oils are extremely concentrated compounds that can be irritating if applied directly to the skin. It is better to dilute them in a carrier oil before application.



Coconut oil

Considered a skin saviour for those with ultra-parched skin, coconut oil is highly comedogenic (it can clog pores) and can pose some serious risks for acne-prone skin. Coconut oil has unsaturated and saturated fats, including lauric acid which is known to cause breakouts.



Cocoa butter

Though it's a rich emollient ingredient that offers great hydration, cocoa butter, like coconut oil, is an extremely comedogenic ingredient that can clog pores and contribute to breakouts. So, if you are prone to acne, it is better to avoid using cocoa butter for your skin.



Common salt

Sodium chloride, or common salt, is commonly used in cleansers for its exfoliating benefits and its ability to thicken formulations to achieve a desired texture. However, it may contribute to getting breakouts and so is best avoided.



Denatured alcohol, ethanol, and isopropyl alcohol

When used in toners and exfoliating products, which are used over the entire face, these specific forms of alcohol become drying and irritating to the overall health of the skin, especially if you have skin on the dryer side.