



MUSCAT DAILY

AN APEX MEDIA PUBLICATION

**PAPA
JOHNS**

TO ORDER CALL
24826400
NOW OPEN AT AZAIBA

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 03, 2022

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

Dhofar road trips turn tragic

The road to Dhofar claims many lives every year when a large number of visitors take the highway to the governorate

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Two people died and six others were injured in a traffic accident that occurred in Al Wusta governorate on Tuesday. With this, the total death toll this year on the road leading to Dhofar during the khareef season has gone up to seven. Additionally, 26 people were reported injured in the accidents.

The Directorate General of Health Services in Al Wusta Governorate informed that on Tuesday morning, the emergency department of Haima Hospital received eight people involved in an accident. 'Two died, one was critically injured and five had moderate injuries.'

The road to Dhofar claims many lives every year when a large number of visitors take the highway to the governorate from Oman and the wider Gulf region.



ROP has deployed special patrol teams and checkpoints on roads leading to Dhofar to guide khareef visitors

Although Royal Oman Police (ROP) and the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority create enough awareness and deploy extra manpower to monitor roads during the khareef, accidents continue to be reported, calling for maximum caution

when travelling long distances.

ROP has deployed special patrol teams and checkpoints on roads leading to Dhofar to guide khareef visitors. The Directorate General of Police Aviation has been supporting operations and providing air ambulance service

in emergency situations, especially in accidents which require urgent transportation.

ROP has urged all visitors to abide by traffic rules and regulations and stay within the speed limit for their safety and that of others.

'Drivers are in particular alerted to look out for sudden occurrences, like the presence of stray animals on the road at night or sand which is also likely to be deposited on roads in desert areas. Other safety requirements to be observed include keeping a

first aid kit, servicing the vehicle in advance and checking brake power and tyre pressure,' ROP stated.

Five people were injured in a road accident in Haima in Al Wusta on Sunday. Of these, three were critically injured, while

two others had minor injuries.

On July 26, seven people were injured in a crash in the same region. On July 20, one person died and five others were injured on the Thumrait-Haima road, while four people died, and three injured on the same road on July 3.

August 2
**2 dead
6 injured**
July 31
5 injured
July 26
7 injured
July 20
**1 dead
5 injured**
July 3
**4 dead
3 injured**

Saudi PIF to invest RO115mn in Oman's Rakiza Fund

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's infrastructure investment fund Rakiza - managed by Oman Infrastructure Investment Management Company (OIM) and London-based investment firm Equitix - has received a capital commitment of RO115mn from Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund (PIF).

Founded by Oman Investment Authority and Equitix, Rakiza is a



private equity fund and an infrastructure investor, targeting investment in Oman and Saudi Arabia. The fund focuses on renewable energy, electricity,

water, social services infrastructure, telecommunications, and transportation and logistics sectors.

In a statement to ONA,

Muneer bin Ali al Muneeri, CEO of OIM, said this partnership with PIF comes within the framework of sharing the national visions of Oman and Saudi Arabia with regard to supporting the privatisation of facilities and infrastructure. He added that the partnership will enhance and maximise the strategic value of stakeholders and related parties.

Hugh Crossley, CEO and co-founder of Equitix, said the partnership with the world's most

prominent investment institution contributes to achieving Rakiza Fund's commitments to develop infrastructure projects. "It is a great addition and development in Rakiza Fund's history, looking forward to further growth in the region."

PIF is one of the most important and influential sovereign wealth funds in the world and the main driver for supporting the economic transformation efforts of Saudi Arabia.

US kills Al Qaeda chief in Afghan drone strike

Kabul, Afghanistan - A United States drone strike killed Al Qaeda chief Ayman al Zawahiri at a hideout in Kabul, President Joe Biden said on Monday, declaring "justice had been delivered" to the families of the 9/11 attacks.

Zawahiri's assassination is the biggest blow to Al Qaeda since US special forces killed Osama bin Laden in 2011, and calls into question the Taliban's promise not to harbour militant groups.

It was the first known over-the-horizon strike by the US on a target in Afghanistan since Washington withdrew its forces from the country on August 31 last year, days after the Taliban swept back to power.

The Taliban condemned the drone strike on Tuesday, but made no mention of casualties nor did they name Zawahiri.

"Justice has been delivered and this terrorist leader is no more," Biden said in a TV address, adding he hoped Zawahiri's death would bring "closure" to families of the 3,000 people killed on September 11, 2001.

Zawahiri was believed to be the mastermind who steered Al Qaeda's operations - including the 9/11 attacks - as well as bin



Ayman al Zawahiri

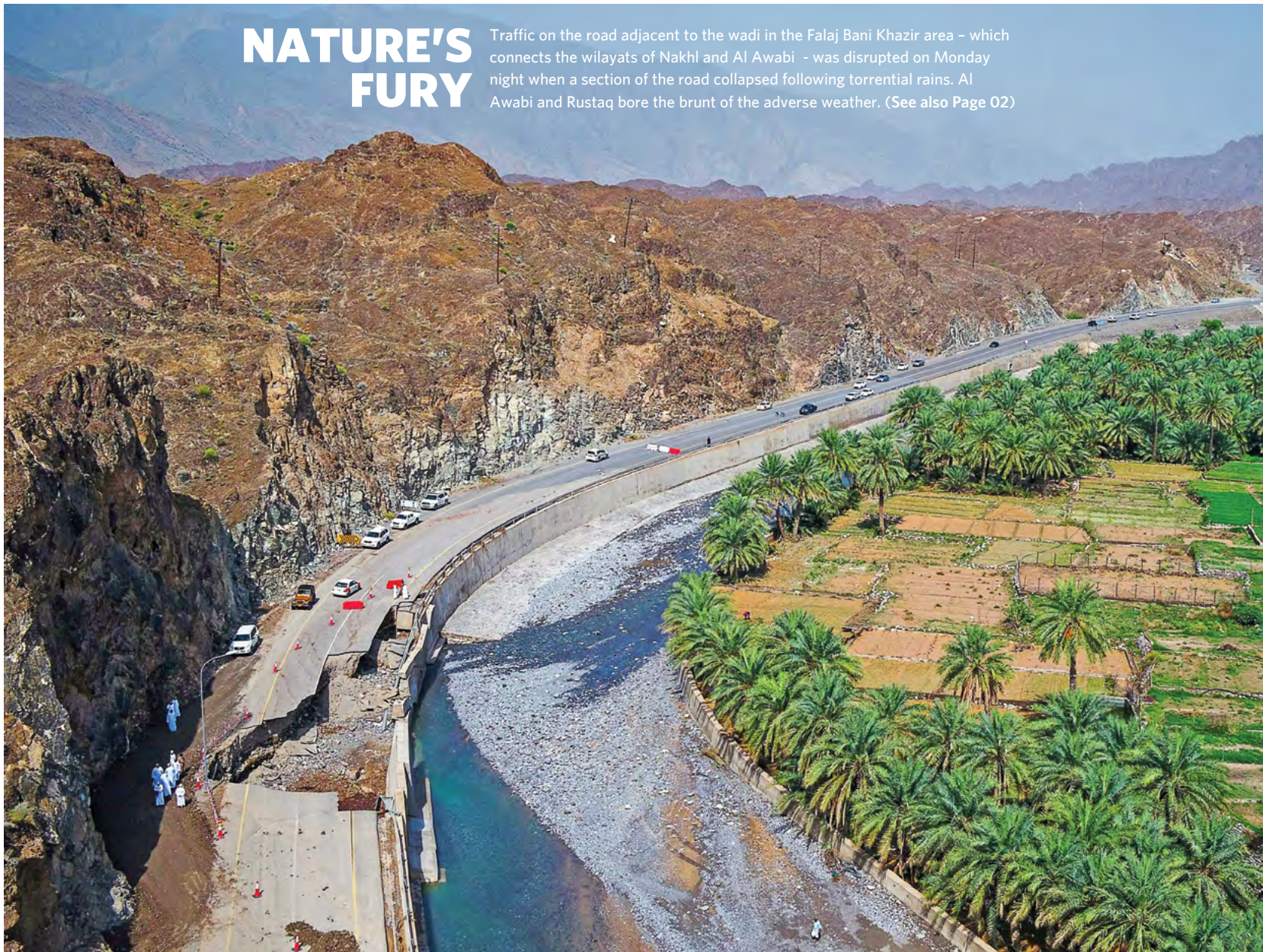
Laden's personal doctor.

A senior administration official said the 71-year-old Egyptian was on the balcony of a three-storey house in Kabul when targeted with two Hellfire missiles after dawn on Sunday. "We identified Zawahiri on multiple occasions for sustained periods of time on the balcony where he was ultimately struck."

The house is in Sherpur, one of Kabul's most affluent neighbourhoods, with several villas occupied by high-ranking Taliban officials and commanders.

The Taliban's interior ministry previously denied reports circulating on social media of a drone strike, telling AFP a rocket struck "an empty house" causing no casualties.

AFP

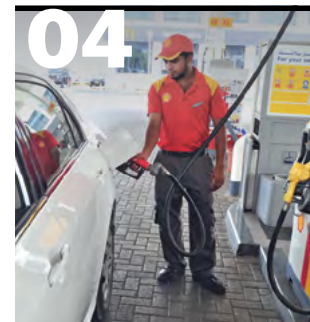


NATURE'S FURY

Traffic on the road adjacent to the wadi in the Falaj Bani Khazir area - which connects the wilayats of Nakhi and Al Awabi - was disrupted on Monday night when a section of the road collapsed following torrential rains. Al Awabi and Rustaq bore the brunt of the adverse weather. (See also Page 02)



03
Real estate worth RO1.17bn traded in H1 2022



04
Oil marketing firms' profits surge on increased sales



Al Awabi, Rustaq bear brunt of rains

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Authorities sprang into action on Tuesday to inspect and restore services in the wilayats of Al Awabi and Rustaq in South Batinah, which were battered by heavy rains and overflowing wadis on Monday.

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT), along with municipal authorities and utility services personnel, worked to restore traffic to and from the governorate, besides electricity, water and telephone networks affected by the rains.

H E Dr Ali bin Amer al Shedhani, Undersecretary for Communications and Information Technology in MTCIT, informed that the ministry is currently working on repairing roads affected by the torrential rains in the two wilayats with the aim of facilitating communication in co-operation with the relevant authorities.



MTCIT Undersecretary H E Dr Ali al Shedhani inspects restoration of a road along a wadi in the Falaj Bani Khazir

Yousef bin Abdullah al Mujaini, Director of Projects Department in MTCIT, said that there was some damage to roads in the two wilayats; work is underway to open those that were temporarily closed.

Sheikh Saeed bin Muhammad

al Harsusi, Deputy Wali of Al Awabi, said that the damage was mostly witnessed in the villages of Wadi Bani Kharus. "Although no human casualties were recorded, the damage to property is significant."

The damage, he added, was

due to water entering homes and farms of citizens, besides washing away cars, and electricity, water and telephone poles. "The concerned authorities started work from early morning to restore basic services. Work is progressing at an accelerated pace."

No loss of life; CDAA ensures safety for all

Muscat - The Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) stated that there was no loss of life during the heavy rains and flooding of wadis on Monday. It added that it is adopting legal action on those endangering themselves and others.

"CDAA has taken all legal measures against those who endanger themselves and others, including individuals swimming in dangerous places and waiting for wadis to overflow and then jumping in it," CDAA stated.

With heavy rains lashing several areas in the past few days, CDAA rescue teams have been on standby to provide assistance during the weather disturbance.

More rains expected; CDAA calls for caution

Our Correspondent
Muscat

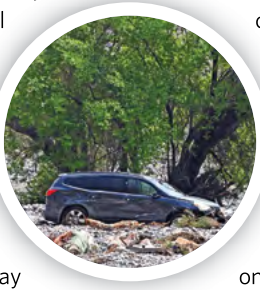
With more rains expected in several governorates on Wednesday, the Civil Defence and Ambulance Authority (CDAA) called on all to adhere to guidelines and ensure safety of life and property.

In a statement CDAA said, 'Due to heavy rains expected on Wednesday in the governorates of North Batinah, South Batinah, Dakhliyah, Buraimi, Dhahirah and North Sharqiyah in the afternoon and evening, the authority calls on everyone to adhere to safety guidelines.'

The Directorate General of Meteorology forecast the continuation of formation of cumulus clouds on Tuesday and Wednesday on the Al Hajar Mountains and adjacent areas with chances of thunderstorms of varying intensity. 'This may lead to overflowing wadis, so exercise caution,' it said.

The Met Office added that there are chances of rain of varying intensity in Dhofar and parts of the central desert area on Wednesday.

On Tuesday, the wilayats of Mahdha and Al Buraimi in Buraimi governorate, Dhank, Ibbri and Yanqul in Dhahirah, Nakhl, Al Awabi and Rustaq in South Batinah, and parts of Dakhliyah and North Sharqiyah governorates received moderate to heavy rains.



3 shelters in Al Awabi and Rustaq activated: NCEM



Our Correspondent
Muscat

Hamoud bin Mohammad al Mandheri, coordinator of Relief and Shelter Sector in the National Committee for Emergency Management (NCEM), has stated that three shelters have been activated in the wilayats of Awabi and Rustaq.

"Heavy rains and overflowing wadis on Sunday and Monday caused some damage, including flooded homes affecting some families. They are being assisted by Royal Oman Police and competent authorities and transferred to safe places," Mandheri said.

He added that the areas affected by the rains and flooding include Falaj Bani Khazir and Wadi Bani Kharus in the wilayat of Awabi, while in Rustaq, the city centre and Wadi Bani Ghafer were affected. "The shelters in these areas are ready to receive citizens and residents," he said.

Heavy rains lashed Awabi on Sunday and Monday, which led to overflowing wadis. Traffic on a road adjacent to the wadi in the Falaj Bani Khazir area - which connects the wilayats of Nakhl and Al Awabi - was disrupted on Monday night when a section of the road collapsed.

Royal Oman Police (ROP) is in a state of high alert to ensure the safety of citizens and residents

and has positioned personnel on all roads.

Col Mohammad bin Awadh al Shanfari, Police Commander of South Batinah Governorate, informed that the ROP and other key authorities concerned with emergency management in the governorate have raised the state of alert and readiness in order to reduce damage caused by overflowing wadis.

He said police patrols are alerting all visitors to wadis to leave in anticipation of increasing water levels. "We call on citizens and residents to exercise utmost caution and communicate with the concerned authorities in emergency situations and not risk crossing wadis."



SULTANATE OF OMAN
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF HEALTH SERVICES
AL DHAHIRAH GOVERNORATE

رؤية عمان 2040
Moving Forward
with Confidence

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ministry of Health - Directorate General of Health Services AL Dhahirah Governorate (DGHS) of Health invites specialized companies to participate in the following Tender: -

Tender Ref.	Description	Last date for Collection of tender Document	Closing Time/ Day/ Date	Tender Fee (Non-Refundable)
1742/2022	Provision Of Drinking Water for Kahanat Health Center and Bilad Alshuhoom Health Center	Monday 15/ AUG /2022	Before 9 am on Sunday 11/ SEP /2022	R.O 25/= Per set

Notes:-

- All Specialized and interested Companies registered with Tender Board obtain Tender documents from the E. Tendering website: <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov>.
- Tenders should be submitted on line on the given website signed and sealed. The Tenderer should enclose scan copy of Bank Guarantee issued by a Local bank for not less than One percent (1%) for the Tender value validity for (90) days from the Tender Submission date, addressed to the Tender Committee in the DGHS .
- The DGHS is not bound to accept the lowest tender and reserves the right to accepts or reject any tender.

(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
Any Clarification, you may contact via
Telephone: 24402200
Email id etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

Breastfeeding needs more awareness

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The world celebrates World Breastfeeding Week from August 1 to 7 with a new theme each year.

The day is commemorated by the Ministry of Health (MoH), represented by the Nutrition Department of the Directorate General of Primary Health Care, in partnership with the World Health Organization Country Office in Oman and relevant public and private entities.

This year's theme - 'Step up for Breastfeeding: Educate and Support' - highlights the role of awareness and education on exclusive breastfeeding and related issues in the community. It also emphasises the role of sustaining breastfeeding-friendly environments to foster the health of children and mothers alike.

This year, Breastfeeding Week will also focus on strengthening the capacities of the key actors that protect, pro-



Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways of reducing health risks associated with malnutrition conditions such as stunting and obesity

DR JEAN JABBOUR

mote and support breastfeeding at various social levels.

According to the results of the National Nutrition Survey 2017, Oman's exclusive breastfeeding rate is 23 per cent, which high-



lights the need for additional measures and efforts to increase awareness and support work in this area.

Dr Jean Jabbour, WHO representative in Oman, informed that

breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways of reducing health risks associated with malnutrition conditions such as stunting, underweight, overweight and obesity.

"The WHO Country Office's commitment to breastfeeding awareness is evident. Supporting activities were included in the Country Cooperation Strategy 2021-2025 and the Country Sup-

port Plan 2022-2023 which are aligned with the WHO Thirteenth General Programme of Work 2019-2023 and the Eastern Mediterranean Vision 2023," Dr Jabbour said.

As part of this week's programme, the Nutrition Department - in cooperation with WHO - is organising several activities, including setting up an awareness booth in Oasis Mall, with the participation of several health institutions and relevant authorities, to raise awareness about aspects related to breastfeeding, and to promote exclusive breastfeeding during the first six months of a newborn's life.

A visit is also planned to the breastfeeding clinic and maternity wards in The Royal Hospital, where interactive educational sessions will be held for the mothers in attendance to emphasise the significance of exclusive breastfeeding and its benefits on the health and development of children in accor-

dance with WHO recommendations. To encourage improved compliance, breastfeeding covers provided by WHO will be distributed at the end of these sessions.

The week will feature several activities in different governorates with efforts dedicated to encourage exclusive breastfeeding in health institutions and the community through awareness campaigns and mother-support programmes.

Health institutions have designated breastfeeding corners and clinics to support attending mothers' needs and concerns.

Additionally, the Nutrition Department - in cooperation with WHO and the Health Education Department - has created several breastfeeding awareness messages to be circulated in MoH and WHO's social media channels (Twitter and Instagram). Educational messages will also be disseminated through the official mass media channels.

PDO, MAFWR sign agreement on sustainable development

Muscat - The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) signed a memorandum of understanding with Petroleum Development Oman on Tuesday in several fields in efforts of achieving sustainable development and establishing a mutually effective partnership between the two.

The memorandum was signed by H E Dr Saud bin Ahmed al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, and Steve Phimister, managing director of PDO. The signing was attended by several officials from both sides.

The agreement stipulates that PDO will share the lessons learnt from the application of



(Supplied photo)

the 'lean methodology' with the ministry by providing training courses while implementing joint lean projects targeting key actions.

The agreement will also support agricultural initiatives by providing technical knowledge and work on initiatives to find joint investment projects to develop the national economy.

The two will work on exploiting the water produced during oil production. 'All possible aspects of benefiting from the water associated with oil production will be studied.'

The two also agreed to organise specialised training courses and workshops on various topics of interest to both.

جامعة التقنية والعلوم التطبيقية
University of Technology and Applied Sciences

University of Technology and Applied Sciences
Electronic Local Tender Announcement

The Internal Tender Committee at the University of Technology and Applied Sciences announces the offering of the practices shown in the following table:

M	practice number	Subject	Companies that are eligible to participate	Document's Price	Last date for electronic purchasing	Last date bid submission
1	17/2022	Providing operation and maintenance services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (College of Applied Sciences in Schar)	Companies and institutions specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board excellent degree	(25) Twenty five Riyal Omani	22/08/2022 14:30 pm	11/09/2022 at 10:00 am
2	18/2022	Providing cleaning services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (College of Technology in Mussanah)	Companies and institutions specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board excellent degree, first, second, third and fourth	(25) Twenty five Riyal Omani	22/08/2022 14:30 pm	11/09/2022 at 10:00 am
3	19/2022	Providing cleaning services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (College of Applied Sciences in Sur)	Companies and institutions specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board excellent degree	(25) Twenty five Riyal Omani	22/08/2022 14:30 pm	11/09/2022 at 10:00 am
4	21/2022	Providing cleaning services for the buildings of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences (Ibra College of Technology)	Companies and institutions specialized in this field and registered with the Tender Board excellent degree, first, second, third	(25) Twenty five Riyal Omani	22/08/2022 14:30 pm	11/09/2022 at 10:00 am

- Where you can purchase the tender documents electronically from Wednesday 03/08/2022, starting from (7:30 am) through the link below:
<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>
- All bidding companies must attach with their bids electronic temporary tender bond in the form of a bank guarantee or a cheque certified by one of the banks operating in the Sultanate, not less than (1%) of the bid value, addressed to the name of the Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee, and valid for a period of (90) days from the date of bid submission. The bid must be submitted sealed by the authorized person, and submitted with the electronic bidding system of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences in the name and number of the tender only.
- Preference in awarding will be given to small and medium enterprises registered with the Authority for SME development and whose bid includes the biggest percentage of Omanisation and a biggest purchase percentage of national products.
- The University shall not be bound to accept the highest or any other bid.

Broad Horizons آفاق واسعة

utas_oman utas.edu.om

Real estate worth RO1.17bn traded in H1 2022

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Real estate worth RO1.179bn was traded in the first six months of 2022, down 7.3 per cent compared to the same period in 2021 when it was RO1.272bn, according to statistics released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The total fees collected for all legal transactions amounted to RO30.4mn, compared to RO50.9mn during the same period in 2021, which is a decrease of 40.4 per cent.

NCSI figures also indicate a decrease in the number of sale contracts by 18.2 per cent until June 2022, but the traded value of sale contracts increased by two per cent year-on-year.



A total of 116,234 properties were traded, compared to 129,149 in the same period in 2021 - a decrease of 9.9 per cent. Citizens from the GCC

states bought 353 properties. There were 35,978 sale contracts, valued at RO613.7mn. The number of swap contracts was 677, valued at RO7.4mn,

while the number of mortgage contracts increased 3.1 per cent to 9,527, worth a total value of RO558.2mn, compared to 9,242 contracts in 2021.

Read Muscat Daily
Stay Informed



R024
1 YEAR
(Actual price: R052)
R015
6 MONTHS

SUBSCRIBE NOW

Toll free no: 80076000
E-mail: customercare@apexmedia.co.om
Call Shamshad: 99104345

an apex media منشور PUBLICATION الأمة للإعلام

www.apexmedia.co.om

MARKET WATCH

MSX30 4,645.86
Sensex 58,136.36

FOREX RATES
(RO1 equals)

Indian	204.05
Pakistan	622.76
Bangladesh	246.24
Philippines	144.38
Sri Lanka	948.86

*Rates as on August 02
Source: xe.com

BRIEFS

Natural disaster losses hit \$72bn in H1: Swiss Re

Total economic losses caused by natural disasters hit an estimated US\$72bn in the first half of 2022, fuelled by storms and floods, Swiss reinsurance giant Swiss Re estimated Tuesday.

Though the figure is lower than the US\$91bn estimate for the first six months of 2021, it is close to the 10-year average of US\$74bn, and the weight is shifting towards weather-induced catastrophes.

"The effects of climate change are evident in increasingly extreme weather events, such as the unprecedented floods in Australia and South Africa," said Martin Bertogg, Swiss Re's head of catastrophe perils.

The Zurich-based group, which acts as an insurer for insurers, said the losses were also propelled by winter storms in Europe as well as heavy thunderstorms on the continent and in the United States.

Oil marketing firms' profits surge on increased sales

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's all three oil marketing companies – Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO), Shell Oman Marketing Company and Al Maha Petroleum Products Marketing Company – have recorded sharp growth in their profits for the first half of 2022 as fuel demand significantly increased this year amid strong economic recovery.

The sultanate's largest oil marketing company OOMCO's net profit for the six months period ended June 30, 2022 more than doubled to RO3.864mn compared to RO1.890mn net profit reported in the same period of 2021. The company's group turnover jumped by 47 per cent to RO364.92mn in the first half of 2022 against RO247.84mn recorded in the previous year.

Shell Oman Marketing reported over 84 per cent jump in net profit for the half year ended June 30, 2022 at RO3.732mn compared to RO2.026mn earned in the corresponding period of 2021. The company's sales revenue rose 28 per cent to RO236.593mn in 2022 against RO184.847mn in the same period of last year.

'Business volumes have seen an improvement in sales over the last quarter with investments in quality and strategically located service sites as well as ongoing enhancements to existing sites resulting in better retail volumes,'



Al Maha Petroleum's net profit jumped by 158 per cent to RO2.62mn during January – June period of 2022 against RO1.016mn net profit recorded in the same period of last year

Shell Oman Marketing said in its financial report submitted to the Muscat Stock Exchange.

The company noted that the overall business-to-business (B2B) market has also shown signs of recovery due to improvement in market activity and positive economic indicators.

Moreover, Al Maha Petroleum posted an impressive 158 per cent year-on-year growth in its net profit for the first half of 2022. The company's net profit rose to RO2.62mn during January – June period of 2022 against RO1.016mn recorded in the same period of last year. Its sales revenue during the first half of 2022 jumped by 30 per cent to RO223.234mn from RO171.497mn in the same period of the previous year.

'Higher crude oil prices during the first half of 2022 boosted commercial activities and thus accelerated economic progress in the country. As a result, the company has achieved an improved performance by registering a 30 per cent growth in sales,' Al Maha Petroleum said in its financial report submitted to the Muscat Stock Exchange.

The company noted that the revenues of its retail segment increased significantly due to the gradual return to normalcy of commercial activities related to this sector. It said the growth in commercial segment is challenging due to intense competition. At the same time, the demand in the construction and electricity sectors is also experiencing some decline.

'However, the increase in new commercial activities due to the increase in government spending and increase in foreign investment in the country's various infrastructure projects is expected to drive business growth in the commercial segment,' Al Maha Petroleum added.



CBO issues RO65mn treasury bills

Our Correspondent
Muscat

A tender of the government treasury bills (issue number 563) was issued this week at the Central Bank of Oman.

Total value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to RO65mn, for a maturity period of 91 days, from August 3, 2022 until November 2, 2022.

The average accepted price reached RO99.313 for every RO100 bill, while the minimum accepted price arrived at RO99.285. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 2.75524 per cent and 2.77431 per cent, respectively.

The interest rate on the repo operations with the CBO is 3.00 per cent, while the discount rate on the treasury bills discounting facility with the central bank is 3.5 per cent.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance. This instrument provides licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds.

The Central Bank of Oman acts as the issue manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (repo).

Furthermore, treasury bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures.



Muscat Finance (S.A.O.G)

P.O.Box: 108, Ruwi, P.C. 112, Sultanate of Oman, Tel: 24625300, Fax: 24625310

Un-Audited Financials for the Period Ended June 2022

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Muscat Finance (SAOG), I am pleased to present the report for the quarter ended June 2022.

Economic Environment

The Economy is showing recovery path post COVID relaxation. Due to increase in oil price the sultanate's total budget surplus increased to RO 631mn for the January–May period of 2022 against a deficit of RO 890mn in the same period of 2021.

Business Results

Your Company has recorded a net profit of RO 724K for the period ended June 2022 against RO 782K net profit for the corresponding period in the previous year. The Net Operating profit for the period has decreased by 13% over corresponding period to RO 1.4mn.

Your company generated RO 4.92mn as net cash flow from operating activities, most of which was utilized to reduce the bank borrowings from RO 62mn as of Dec 2021 to RO 57mn for the period ended June 2022.

The financial results are summarized below:

Amount in RO '000			
PARTICULARS	YTD 30th June 2022	YTD 30th June 2021	% Change
Net Investment in Finance Debtors	101,547	110,583	(8%)
Net Operating Income	3,294	3,453	(5%)
Operating Expenses	1,800	1,727	4%
Operating Profit	1,494	1,726	(13%)
Provisions	770	944	18%
Net Profit/(Loss) after tax	724	782	(7%)

stand at RO 101mn.

Accelerated remedial and legal recourse on non-performing loans has resulted in stemming the flow of new provisions.

Human Capital

Your Company fully recognises that having a competent, highly motivated, and performance-led workforce is key to ensuring the success of our business. Our people play a vital role in ensuring sustainability of our business by delivering on our transformation strategy and goals. We recognise that Human Resources play a pivotal role in enabling smooth implementation of key strategic decisions through Employee development, Employee engagement, Compensation & benefits and Employee wellness. The company continues to invest in building local talent with Omanisation ratio standing at 87% for the period ended June 30, 2022. This is well above the current regulatory requirement.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The company acknowledges its responsibility towards contributing to the community, stemming from its strong belief that the society at large is the reason for the success of Muscat Finance.

The company has contributed for buying an equipment which will be useful for patient in emergency for a hospital and also contributed to Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment for promoting "Made In Oman" initiative during the Holy month of Ramadhan.

Future outlook

The removal of COVID-19 restrictions and higher oil prices have boosted Oman's economic recovery and significantly raised the confidence in the stability of macro-financial system in 2022.

Acknowledgement

On behalf of the Board and the company, I would like to express our sincere gratitude and best wishes to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq to lead the Sultanate of Oman with his wisdom and vision, towards a path of prosperity.

I would like to thank His Majesty's Government, the Central Bank of Oman, the Capital Market Authority and other Authorities for their continued support and guidance. We are also grateful to all our customers for their continued patronage and support, to our local and overseas bankers for their active co-operation,

and to all the shareholders for the confidence reposed in its Board.

On Behalf of the Board of Directors
Faisal Mohamed Al Yousef
Chairman

5G services in India to be launched by October

New Delhi, India – The fifth generation (5G) telecom services are likely to be launched in India by October this year.

India's government on Monday successfully completed the 5G spectrum auction mopping up over Rs1.50tn in bids by four companies including Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone Idea and Adani Data Networks.

Addressing a media briefing after the end of the bidding for 5G spectrum, Union Minister of Communications, Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said out of the total 72,098 MHz of spectrum on offer, 51,236 MHz or around 71 per cent has been sold in the auction. Total 40 rounds of bidding were conducted in the past seven days.

Talking to ANI, Vaishnaw said the allocation of the spectrum to the successful bidders would be done by August 10 and the 5G services are likely to be launched in the country by October this year.

"Auction has been completed and in the next few days, till August 10, all formalities including approving and allocating the spectrum will be done. It seems we would be able to launch 5G in the country by October. The ongoing 5G spectrum auction indicates that the country's telecom industry has come a long way in 5G advancements," the minister said.

Vaishnaw added that better availability of spectrum will improve the quality of telecom services in the country.

Reliance Jio Infocomm Limited has made bids worth Rs880bn accounting for 58.65 per cent of the total value received by the government in the 5G spectrum auction. Bharti Airtel has made bids worth



Rs430bn to acquire frequency bands. Vodafone Idea Limited has made bids worth Rs188bn.

Reacting on the auction results, Akash M Ambani, chairman of Reliance Jio Infocomm, said, "We have always believed that India will become a leading economic power in the world by adopting the power of breakthrough technologies. This was the vision and conviction that gave birth to Jio. The speed, scale and societal impact of Jio's 4G rollout is unmatched anywhere in the world. Now, with a bigger ambition and stronger resolve, Jio is set to lead India's march into the 5G era."

"We will celebrate 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' with a pan India 5G rollout. Jio is committed to offering world-class, affordable 5G and 5G-enabled services. We will provide services, platforms and solutions that will accelerate India's digital revolution, especially in crucial sectors like education, healthcare, agriculture, manufacturing and e-Governance," Ambani said in a statement.

Gopal Vittal, managing director and CEO of Bharti Airtel, said in a statement, "Airtel is de-

lighted with the results of the 5G auction. This spectrum acquisition at the latest auction has been a part of a deliberate strategy to buy the best spectrum assets at a substantially lower relative cost compared to our competition."

"This will allow us to raise the bar on innovation and address the emerging needs of every discerning customer who demands the best experience in India. We are confident that we will be able to deliver the best 5G experience in India in terms of coverage, speeds and latency," he said.

Vittal said the new spectrum acquired through the auction would allow Bharti Airtel to change a lot of established paradigms for both B2C and B2B customers.

"5G technology is the revolution that can alter India's manufacturing, services and several other sectors. We remain fully committed to the government's Digital India Vision and will continue to do what is needed to ensure that India becomes a beacon for the world in terms of technology," Vittal said.

ANI

Energy giant BP's profit triples to \$9.3bn on soaring oil prices

London, UK - British oil giant BP rebounded to second-quarter profit on soaring energy prices, it said Tuesday, after a big loss linked to its Russia exit following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Net profit hit US\$9.3bn in the three months to June – a three-fold increase from the same period last year, the company said in a results statement.

And it contrasted sharply with a US\$20.4bn loss after tax in the first quarter, when it took a vast writedown after its decision to leave Russia.

BP is the latest energy major to post bumper second-quarter earnings as oil and gas prices have surged in the wake of key producer Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



BP forecasts that oil prices will remain elevated in the third quarter due to ongoing disruption to Russian supply and reduced levels of spare capacity

Prices also spiked after countries lifted Covid pandemic lockdowns, spurring global energy demand.

British rival Shell revealed last week a fivefold surge in net profit to US\$18bn while France's TotalEnergies raked in nearly US\$6bn.

US majors ExxonMobil and Chevron last week logged record profits for the same period.

Turning to the third-quarter outlook, BP forecast Tuesday that oil prices will "remain ele-

vated ... due to ongoing disruption to Russian supply, reduced levels of spare capacity and with inventory levels significantly below the five-year average".

It warned gas prices will also remain "elevated and volatile" as Russia also squeezes European supplies in retaliation for Western sanctions over the assault on Ukraine.

The gas outlook was "heavily dependent on Russian pipeline flows or other supply disruptions", BP added.

The group's share price jumped about four percent in London trade, as investors welcomed news of a dividend hike and a US\$3.5bn stock buyback.

Revenues were catapulted 86 per cent to almost US\$68bn from a year earlier.

At the same time, BP posted a net loss of US\$11.1bn for the first half of 2022.

That was sparked by a colossal first-quarter charge of US\$24.4bn, linked to a decision to exit its 19.75-per cent stake in

Russian energy group Rosneft as well as its other activities in the country.

That wiped out the overall benefit of high energy prices in the first half.

Gas prices, which skyrocketed in March after Russia launched its invasion of neighbouring Ukraine, surged last week after Moscow curbed crucial deliveries to Europe.

The market remains at its highest level since March after state-run Gazprom suspended gas deliveries to Latvia on Saturday.

Back in Britain, the government in May proposed a temporary windfall tax on BP and its UK rivals including Shell to help ease a cost-of-living crisis.

AFP

Iran slams US sanctions targeting oil trade

Tehran, Iran - Iran on Tuesday slammed as "destructive" new US sanctions targeting its crucial energy sector and vowed a response, at a time when nuclear talks have stalled for months.

US President Joe Biden's administration "is not stopping this unproductive and destructive action even at a time when efforts are underway to resume negotiations to revive the Iran nuclear deal," said foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani.

Iran will "show a firm and immediate response" to the sanctions announced the previous day and "take all necessary measures to neutralise" their potential impacts on the country's trade, Kanani vowed in a statement.

The US government blacklisted six companies Monday that it said helped Iran export petrochemicals to East Asia in

avoidance of sanctions over Tehran's nuclear programme.

Three Hong Kong-based trading companies and one United Arab Emirates firm were hit with US Treasury sanctions for helping Iran's Persian Gulf Petrochemical Industry Commercial Co ship "millions of dollars worth" of petroleum and petrochemical products to unnamed East Asian buyers, the Treasury said.

In addition, the US State Department blacklisted two shipping firms, based in China and Singapore, for helping arrange the shipments.

The move came as talks in Vienna between Iran and several major powers, including the United States, to revive the frayed 2015 international agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme have been at a standstill since March.

AFP



شركة عمان والإمارات للاستثمار والقابضة (ش.م.ع.)
OMAN & EMIRATES INVESTMENT HOLDING CO. SAOG

P.O. Box 2205, Ruwi, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: +968 24489458, Fax: +968 24489465,
E-mail: oeiman@omantel.net.om
Website: www.omanemirates.com

Board of Directors' Report – 30th June 2022

Honorable Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board, I take this opportunity to present the financial performance of Oman & Emirates Investment Holding Co SAOG for the six months period ended 30th June 2022.

Financial Results:

The Company (Group & Parent) recorded Net Profits of RO 1,884,652 and RO 1,957,285 respectively during January to June 2022, compared to (Group & Parent) Net Profits of RO 844,738 and RO 849,876 respectively during January to June 2021. The Break-up details are as under:

Particulars	Equity Holding %	Jan– Jun 2022 RO	Jan – Jun 2021 RO
Profit/(Loss) before share of results of Subsidiaries and Associates		2,129,604	354,918
FINCORP Al Amal Fund	24.33	-	214,203
FINCORP SAOG	51.20	(124,322)	367,068
Oman Hotels and Tourism Co. SAOC	31.72	(88,465)	(170,604)
Oman Fiber Optic Co. SAOC	20.97	40,468	84,291
Net Profit/ (Loss) - Parent		1,957,285	849,876
Oman Euro Food Industries Co. SAOG	80.84	(72,633)	(5,138)
Net Profit/ (Loss) - Group		1,884,652	844,738

Stock Market Indices:

During the period January to June 2022, MSM declined by 0.17%, while ADX and DFM increased by 10.44% and 0.86% respectively (January–June 2021: MSM, ADX and DFM increased by 11.06%, 35.48% and 12.78% respectively.

Net Equity, Investments and Borrowing:

The Net Equity of the Group and the Parent Company increased by 8.94% and 8.92% respectively during the first half of the year. The Net Equity of the Group reached RO 22.957 Million at 30.6.2022 (30.06.2021: RO 20.395 Million) up from RO 21.073 Million at 31.12.2021. The Net Equity of the Parent reached RO 23.900 Million at 30.6.2022 (30.06.2021: RO 21.129 Million) up from RO 21.943 at 31.12.2021.

The Total Investment Values of the Group and the Parent Company were RO 32.987 Million and RO 30.925 Million respectively as at 30.6.2022 (30.6.2021: Group RO 41.761 Million and Parent Company RO 39.401 Million).

The total borrowing of the Group and the Parent Company have reduced to RO 16.395 Million and RO 12.674 Million respectively as at 30.06.2022 (30.06.2021: Group RO 25.012 Million and Parent Company RO 21.284 Million). The Parent Company's Debt/ Equity ratio stood at 0.53, further down from 0.8 at start of the year, an opportune situation to be in at such times of such high inflation rates and rising interest rates.

Future Outlook:

Macroeconomic uncertainties linger with monetary tightening and a looming recession. The International Monetary Fund slashed global forecasts and expects the world economy to grow 3.2% in 2022, marking a downgrade of 0.4 percentage points, before slowing to a 2.9% in 2023, a downgrade of 0.7 percentage points. Inflationary pressures and rising interest rates remain as challenges to economic activity.

Oman's economic growth will be higher than last year due to increased oil and gas output. Eased pandemic related restrictions and progress on the government's structural reforms and diversification efforts should fuel investment. Nevertheless, the investment environment remains challenging as it continues to affect the stability of financial markets, dampens investor sentiment and will continue to remain subdued with tight liquidity and strained cash flows.

Acknowledgement:

I take this opportunity to convey our heartfelt gratitude to the Governments of the Sultanate of Oman and United Arab Emirates for their support to our Company. I also thank the stock market authorities, banks, shareholders and employees of the Company for their guidance, cooperation and efforts.

Mohamed Darwish Al Khoori
Chairman

28th July 2022

CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT 30 JUNE 2022

	30 June 2022 Group RO	(Restated) 30 June 2021 Group RO	31 December 2021 Group RO	30 June 2022 Parent RO	(Restated) 30 June 2021 Parent RO	31 December 2021 Parent RO
ASSETS						
Cash and cash equivalents	4,175,220	1,043,399	1,919,812	3,316,016	110,508	113,040
Trade and other receivables	1,513,920	1,204,554	1,075,767	42,010	58,308	40,850
Inventories	594,039	552,574	434,392	-	-	-
Financial assets at fair value through profit or loss	15,273,103	21,859,957	20,481,259	11,160,603	17,637,376	16,651,253
Investment in associates	15,608,817	17,785,168	16,100,249	13,911,100	15,782,784	14,110,383
Financial assets at amortised cost	2,104,660	2,115,350	2,109,961	2,104,660	2,115,350	2,109,961
Investment in subsidiaries	-	-	-	3,748,921	3,865,002	3,873,243
Property, plant and equipment	2,386,829	2,675,808	2,531,702	464,746	565,297	515,016
Investment properties	3,012,750	3,166,950	3,074,850	2,742,750	2,866,950	2,804,850
Right-of-use asset	43,577	116,190	43,577	-	-	-
Deferred tax asset	62,626	429,426	78,496	-	-	-
Total assets	44,775,541	50,949,376	47,850,065	37,490,806	43,001,575	40,218,596
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES						
Equity attributable to the owners of the parent						
Share capital	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500	12,187,500
Legal reserve	4,991,892	4,921,214	4,991,892	4,062,500	4,062,500	4,062,500
Retained earnings	5,777,871	3,286,853	3,893,219	7,650,102	4,878,978	5,692,817
Equity attributable to the owners of the parent	22,957,263	20,395,567	21,072,611	23,900,102	21,128,978	21,942,817
Non-controlling interest	3,349,922	3,510,207	3,485,638	-	-	-
Total equity	26,307,185	23,905,774	24,558,249	23,900,102	21,128,978	21,942,817
LIABILITIES						
Bank overdrafts	285,532	1,782,977	630,360	217,525	1,708,891	562,017
Trade and other payables	2,020,021	1,892,248	2,054,192	916,830	587,721	812,952
Lease liability	53,454	139,392	53,454	-	-	-
Term loans	2,456,349	5,775,985	3,100,810	2,456,349	5,775,985	3,100,810
Loans from Governments	12,961,120	15,776,692	16,136,924	9,308,120	12,123,692	12,483,924
Deferred Government grant	691,880	1,676,308	1,316,076	691,880	1,676,308	1,316,076
Total liabilities	18,468,356	27,043,602	23,291,816	13,590,704	21,872,597	18,275,779
Total equity and liabilities	44,775,541	50,949,376	47,850,065	37,490,806	43,001,575	40,218,596
Net assets per share	0.188	0.167	0.173	0.196	0.173	0.180

CONDENSED INTERIM CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS FOR THE SIX-MONTHS PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	Jan - Jun 2022 Group RO	(Restated) Jan - Jun 2021 Group RO	Apr - Jun 2022 Group RO	(Restated) Apr - Jun 2021 Group RO	Jan - Jun 2022 Parent RO	(Restated) Jan - Jun 2021 Parent RO	Apr - Jun 2022 Parent RO	(Restated) Apr - Jun 2021 Parent RO
Rental income	56,205	19,539	30,541	9,769	56,205	19,539	30,541	9,769
Brokerage commission income	62,506	54,013	24,971	19,931	-	-	-	-
Dividends income	568,816	728,043	119,284	306,376	479,034	643,892	128,760	239,295
Realised gain on sale of financial assets	1,947,391	277,820	1,934,324	511,150	1,887,263	274,528	1,920,095	511,428
Unrealised gain/(loss) on financial assets at fair value through profit or loss – net	301,666	624,159	(428,330)	888,824	366,382	135,818	86,166	553,218
Gross profit on sale of food products	115,622	158,249	41,329	91,858	-	-	-	-
Share of (loss)/profit from associates & subsidiaries – net	(255,243)	361,487	(318,474)	(28,527)	(172,319)	494,958	(464,100)	100,003
Management fees	52,526	66,990	27,716	31,620	-	-	-	-
Other income	15,310	19,499	8,976	11,453	-	18,029	-	11,958
Total income	2,864,799	2,309,799	1,440,337	1,842,454	2,616,565	1,586,764	1,701,462	1,425,671
Expenses								
Staff costs	(388,123)	(445,943)	(201,737)	(202,545)	(157,958)	(193,811)	(83,897)	(82,381)
Administrative expenses	(350,102)	(325,035)	(185,612)	(159,506)	(195,311)	(201,069)	(107,036)	(106,737)
Investment related expenses	(5,301)	(5,301)	(302)	(2,665)	(5,301)	(5,301)	(302)	(2,665)
Total expenses	(743,526)	(776,279)	(387,651)	(364,716)	(358,570)	(400,181)	(191,235)	(191,783)
Net operating profit	2,121,273	1,533,520	1,052,686	1,477,738	2,257,995	1,186,583	1,510,227	1,233,888
Finance costs	(356,468)	(368,439)	(169,854)	(223,693)	(300,710)	(336,707)	(142,212)	(210,634)
Profit for the period before tax	1,764,805	1,165,081	882,832	1,254,045	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Income tax	(15,869)	28,321	24,118	10,869	-	-	-	-
Profit for the period after tax	1,748,936	1,193,402	906,950	1,264,914	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Attributable to:								
Owners of the parent company	1,884,652	844,738	1,316,460	1,034,034	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Non-controlling interest	(135,716)	348,664	(409,510)	230,880	-	-	-	-
	1,748,936	1,193,402	906,950	1,264,914	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Basic earnings per share	0.0155	0.007	0.011	0.0085	0.0161	0.0070	0.0112	0.0084

CONDENSED INTERIM CONSOLIDATED AND SEPARATE STATEMENT OF OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE SIX-MONTHS PERIOD ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

	Jan - Jun 2022 Group RO	(Restated) Jan - Jun 2021 Group RO	Apr - Jun 2022 Group RO	(Restated) Apr - Jun 2021 Group RO	Jan - Jun 2022 Parent RO	(Restated) Jan - Jun 2021 Parent RO	Apr - Jun 2022 Parent RO	(Restated) Apr - Jun 2021 Parent RO
Profit for the period after tax	1,748,936	1,193,402	906,950	1,264,914	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the period	1,748,936	1,193,402	906,950	1,264,914	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Total comprehensive income attributable to:								
Owners of the Parent Company	1,884,652	844,738	1,316,460	1,034,034	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254
Non-controlling interest	(135,716)	348,664	(409,510)	230,880	-	-	-	-
	1,748,936	1,193,402	906,950	1,264,914	1,957,285	849,876	1,368,015	1,023,254

Note: The complete Financial Statements of the Company in Arabic or English will be made available to any shareholder on request.

ahlibank joins OWA to support women job seekers

In line with its Corporate Social Responsibility, ahlibank announced its support for the training programme to assist social security families and less fortunate families within the initiatives of the Omani Women's Association (OWA) in Muscat.

In a press statement issued on Tuesday, the bank said that the 'initiatives' to support women job seekers are "offering courses and training programmes in various areas, including beauty, and tailoring".

The agreement for the purpose was signed by Jumana al Hashmi, deputy head Marketing and Corporate Communications of ahlibank, and Aliya Sultan al Housni, acting chairperson of the Board of Directors of Omani Women's Association in Muscat, and chair of the Economic Committee, the bank said.

The signing event took place on Monday in ahlibank's headquarters in the presence of several representatives from both institutions.

Addressing the occasion, Hashmi said that the bank was delighted "to strengthen our partnership with one of the most important and active associations in Oman".

"We hope this contribution will positively impact the target group of women from social security and less fortunate families," she further said, adding



that as a well-established banking institution in Oman, the bank's "core mission is to provide outstanding products and services that help customers manage their portfolios better and reach out to individuals who need support, whether in the form of an initiative or financial support in collaboration with various charities".

Aliya al Housni said, "We appreciate ahlibank's efforts, its ongoing commitment to strengthen its relationship with the association, and its interest to participate in our initiatives, which are aimed at promoting the social and economic level of women and other groups benefiting from the activities of the Omani Women's Association in Muscat."

This initiative, she said would

support 20 families in the community. "We look forward to continuing to cooperate with the Bank to create a greater impact and contribution to Oman's Vision 2040."

This initiative emphasises the bank's interest in supporting charities' initiatives and its awareness in organising such training and rehabilitation programmes that contribute to increasing family stability and encouraging job seekers to manage their own business by promoting the concept of self-employment, thereby, developing capacities and talent to achieve sustainable development goals in the community.

The duration of the programme is three weeks and consists of pillars including direct operation, training combined

with operation and rehabilitation to open a small or medium-sized project as well as supporting productive families.

The job seekers training program is featured by the presence of trainers with excellent experience in these fields and the existence of integrated training workshops that help participants make the most of the programme.

ahlibank continues to support various social, educational, cultural, health and sports activities in Oman as part of its corporate values and ambitious vision, which are critical to the bank's employees and leadership. Through social responsibility, the bank is keen to create a framework that will help create added value for the community through the 'ahlicares' initiatives.



NBO welcomes new batch of young Omani interns

Continuing to provide young people with opportunities to succeed, National Bank of Oman (NBO) has welcomed its latest batch of 35 interns, the bank said in a statement.

Having completed their orientation session, which familiarised them with NBO's values, operations and other key information, they are now ready to embark on their work experience, it added.

The internship programme is designed to upskill Omani graduates and enhance their banking and financial experience, and will see them make their way through the bank's different divisions and branches and, ultimately,

equip them with the professional and social skills to confidently enter the job market.

To date, NBO has welcomed 297 interns in 2022.

Aliya al Balushi, assistant general manager, head of Talent & Performance Management at NBO, said, "Internships are extremely useful for young people to build on their education with real life experience. By guiding and supporting our interns, and helping them to identify and secure new roles and opportunities, we are building a solid base of talent and supporting the building of a competitive and knowledge-based economy as per Oman's 2040 Vision."

NBO's long-standing commitment to Oman's young people is demonstrated by a number of initiatives that it organises and supports, including its partnerships with the Ministry of Labour to offer a supplementary course for graduates of the National Leadership Development Programme, Etimad and Outward Bound Oman which will see 600 young people develop their skills.

Through these initiatives, NBO is empowering young Omanis to take their place as future business leaders and supporting the government's ambitions for socio-economic development, NBO said.

New sports season gets underway exclusively on beIN SPORTS

beIN Media Group (beIN), the global sports, media, and entertainment group, and its flagship sports channel beIN SPORTS, will bring a new exceptional 2022/23 sports season to audiences' screens for the remainder of the year, live and exclusively across all 24 countries of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

With the summer's sporting tournaments almost over, beIN's millions of viewers and subscribers can look forward to mammoth sporting events, including the English Premier League, UEFA Champions League, LaLiga, Ligue1, Europa League, UEFA Super Cup, UEFA Europa Conference League, AFCON qualifiers, CAF Super Cup, 2022 US Open, NBA, FIBA EuroBasket 2022, 2022 FIBA Women's Basketball World Cup, the Padel World Championship, and more, leading up to the world's most prestigious event: The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022TM.

Commenting on beIN's unparalleled sports offering, Duncan Walkinshaw, director of Programmes at beIN MENA, said, "Next season will be totally unique, as we witness a football calendar like never before. We are delighted to bring the very best premium sporting events from the remainder of 2022 exclusively to our audiences across MENA."

beIN remains committed to providing outstanding coverage and exclusive content that brings viewers right into the heart of the action, Walkinshaw asserted, pointing out that "we're also raising the bar with our coverage this year ensuring we're fully prepared to provide the best ever coverage of the greatest show on earth, the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022TM".

The football season kicks off on Friday with the return of the EPL and Ligue 1. The UEFA Super Cup 2022 will be on live and exclusive on August 10.

Entries open for GHSO Energy Future Leaders Programme

The Energy Future Leaders Programme - organised as part of the 2022 edition of the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman (GHSO) Global Conference & Exhibition - formally kicked off on Monday, said a press release.

The novel initiative will open the way for young energy researchers - from and abroad - to be part of Oman's premier green energy forum set to take place at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in Muscat from December 5 to 7 this year.

Announcing the start of the Energy Future Leaders Programme, Dr Intisar al Busaidi - Team Leader said, "For a limited period only, interested college and university students from Oman and abroad can register to be part of this exciting opportunity to showcase their research work on green hydrogen at this year's GHSO 2022 Global Summit and Exhibition."

The winning submissions will be invited on stage to speak about their research work and receive prestigious awards as well. "For details about eligibility and registration criteria, interested students are requested to check out our dedicated page: www.greenhydrogensummitoman.com," Dr Busaidi added.



As many as 120-plus leading universities from around the world, including all of the universities in the Sultanate of Oman, are expected to participate in the Energy Future Leaders Programme, said Dr Al Busaidi, a well-known Omani Petroleum Engineer.

"We expect interest to be strong primarily because green energy is an emerging discipline with huge potential across the world. Participants will have the opportunity to network with industry professionals and peers, giving them valuable exposure to

this exciting industry."

"But the programme will have broader spinoffs for the goal of human capacity building and R&D," Dr Busaidi pointed out, adding that they "envision the potential for this programme to prepare a new cadre of young professionals for jobs in the future green hydrogen industry, as well as enhance R&D opportunities in the green energy space".

Abstracts of student research work were to be submitted in the prescribed format latest by July 31 to be eligible to enter the programme.

Following an evaluation phase

by an eminent jury, a shortlist of merit-worthy candidates would be invited to submit a detailed paper on their work, the statement added.

While all of the finalists will be provided space in the exhibition area to showcase their work, three of them will receive the distinct honour to present their work during the summit.

"We look forward to working closely with Dr Intisar (al Busaidi) and her all-Omani team in delivering an impactful Energy Future Leaders Programme as part of GHSO 2022," said Abdullah al Harthy, chairman - Birba

Energy, the lead organisers of the Green Hydrogen Summit Oman event.

"By opening up the programme to participants from both Oman and abroad, we envision the potential for cross-border collaboration in R&D and academic filed, knowledge sharing and skills development in new cutting-edge disciplines."

Organised by Birba Energy in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, the three day Summit & Exhibition will focus on Oman's strategy to develop a world-class industry that, on the one hand, meets the energy requirements of the sultanate's future low-carbon economy, and on the other, serve as a major global supplier of the carbon-neutral fuel.

Given the strategic national significance of this forum, GHSO 2022 has received strong sponsorship support from a number of leading energy companies, developers and technology providers. Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL), and energy Development Oman has signed up as Host sponsor Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) has signed up as main sponsor.

Lamborghini's best half-year results ever show 282 cars delivered in ME

Automobili Lamborghini has continued its positive trend from the start of the year and set a new record, concluding its best six months ever to the end of June 2022 in terms of sales, turnover and profitability, the company stated.

Global deliveries stood at 5,090 units (+4.9 per cent), while in terms of financial indicators turnover reached €1.33bn, which marked an increase of 30.6 per cent over the first six months of 2021. Operating profit was also 69.6 per cent up, going from €251mn to €425mn. The corresponding operating margin was 31.9 per cent after 24.6 per



cent in the previous year period, it added.

The step up in profitability in the first half of the year was driven by an increase in volumes; the product mix; higher customi-

sation; and positive exchange rates.

"We have come to the end of an exceptional first half of the year, despite ongoing uncertainty caused by the geopolitical situa-

tion," said Stephan Winkelmann, chairman and CEO of Automobili Lamborghini, adding that "the outlook is equally positive, with orders taken already covering the whole of 2023 production".

Paolo Poma, managing director and CFO of Automobili Lamborghini, added, "This is a very challenging time but Lamborghini is facing it successfully thanks to a clear long-term strategy,

which is bolstered by the brand's great appeal.

"The results from the first half underline the positive trend and strengthen our conviction that we can end 2022 with a significant increase in results compared to the previous year."

There is a balanced spread in deliveries to customers over the three macro-regions in which Lamborghini is represented, with America, Asia Pacific and EMEA (Europe, the Middle East and Africa) accounting for 34 per cent, 25 per cent and 41 per cent of global volumes respectively.

More specifically, the United States is the number one market

(1,521 units), followed by Chinese mainland, Hong Kong and Macau (576), Germany (468), the United Kingdom (440) and the Middle East (282).

In terms of model split, the Urus Super SUV is responsible for 61 per cent of sales while the Huracán and Aventador super sports cars (the latter of which is reaching the end of production) account for 39 per cent.

Among the new products this year, a very warm reception was given to the Huracán Tecnica, which was unveiled in April. Starting in August, there will be three new product announcements this year.



Bank Nizwa hosts Wholesale Business Group meeting in Dhofar

In honour of its Wholesale Business Group clients, Bank Nizwa recently organised a gala event in Dhofar to show prospects for growth in the Islamic finance industry for individuals and businesses.

The event witnessed the presence of Bank Nizwa's Chairman, board members, executives and other staff, said a press statement. Earlier this year, similar client events were hosted in Muscat and Sohar, the bank said.

Claimed to be Oman's 'leading and fastest-growing Islamic bank' - Bank Nizwa "plans to utilise cutting-edge technology and find new business opportunities in the Dhofar governorate's wholesale banking market".

A great turnout of attendees made the event a resounding success, it further added.

The event highlighted Bank Nizwa's broad scope of Sharia'a-compliant products and services. The bank's team also emphasised the value and advantages of Islamic banking as a tool for attaining long-term development objectives in the Dhofar governorate.

The purpose of the client gathering was to draw attention to the possibilities for their professional or corporate growth within the Islamic finance industry.

"Dhofar extensively contributes to the ongoing growth of the national economy and is affected by it. The region has recently been attracting huge amounts of capital that have been invested in several important projects," said Sheikh Khalid Abdullah al Khaili, chairman of Bank Nizwa.

"Understanding the importance of Dhofar, we at Bank Nizwa participate in a gamut of



activities for economic development through its Sharia'a-compliant banking products and services catered to various industries with coverage in the region. We are committed to being a vital contributor to the nation's growing economy and our presence in Dhofar has been significant," he added.

Khalid al Kayed, the bank's CEO said, "This event comes as part of our commitment to consistently connect with our customers by proposing specialised financial solutions, services and industry knowledge, our Wholesale Banking services enables businesses and individuals to optimise their operations and cash flow, manage risks, enter new markets and manage their capital and personal requirements".

Kayed claimed that the bank "establish trustworthy relationships by putting our customers'

long-term interests first and assisting them in achieving their strategic goals".

"We can help our customers realise their full potential owing to our remarkable blend of local, in-country presence and knowledge, keen market insights and regional network connectivity," he added.

During the event, the bank highlighted its performance and contribution to the Dhofar governorate through a presentation by its General Manager of Wholesale banking, R Narasimhan. The presentation focused on how Bank Nizwa's wholesale banking function is in line with the sultanate's Vision 2040, offering its clients innovative Sharia'a-compliant products and services that are convenient, secure, and convenient.

Bank Nizwa aims to support large-scale projects that contribute

clearly to the national economy while also emphasising the growing demand for Sharia'a-compliant finance.

Bank Nizwa's Wholesale Banking division is developing ten vertical business units based on the Universal Banking model. With this approach, the bank offers its clients a 360-degree solution; contributing to the development of each sector and helping the bank grow steadily at the same time.

In line with Bank Nizwa's growth strategy and contribution to the sultanate's economic diversification goals, the Wholesale Banking Group concluded several unique financing structures, including green financing, food security projects, Public-Private Partnership model, infrastructure-related projects, tourism projects, projects of the aviation industry and core manufacturing

industries like Steel, Cement, Plastics, Chemicals, Oil and Gas.

Bank Nizwa remains committed to its support for the sultanate's economic diversification plan by providing financial backing to establish the key national projects in various vital sectors across the country.

Bank Nizwa has remained committed to its goal of growing its business throughout the sultanate and providing customers with a sterling Islamic banking experience everywhere in the nation. It has also continued to invest its human capital.

The Salalah branch is self-sufficient with proficient, qualified and well-trained Omani staff members that not only possess the knowledge, skills and aptitude to answer the various customer demands but also have a better awareness of the community.

DACF says queries for private jets to Doha increased

DC Aviation Al-Futtaim (DCAF) has seen a surge in requests for private jets to Doha as football fever kicks in ahead of this year's FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

To accommodate the huge volume of requests and to make travel more convenient, DCAF will make available aircraft ranging from the very light and affordable 4-seater Cessna Citation Mustang to the light jet 8-seater Pilatus PC-12, the midsize jet 9-seater Bombardier Challenger 604. In addition, DCAF will also be able to offer a 10-seater Falcon 2000 as well as large-size cabin aircraft.

"We have seen a sharp increase in enquiries for the later stages of the tournament from the first week of December until the finals which take place on December 18 at the 80,000-capacity Lusail Stadium. We are closely monitoring the level of enquiries and are well prepared with our offering," said Holger Ostheimer, managing director of DC Aviation Al-Futtaim.



Holger Ostheimer

pared with our offering," said Holger Ostheimer, managing director of DC Aviation Al-Futtaim.

Die-hard football fans travelling through DCAF's facility can expect the shortest distance from drop-off to the aircraft with customs and immigration to security checks performed within the comforts of the FBO.

Fans will be able to board their flight within minutes thereby giving them more time to enjoy every minute of this memorable experience.

Ooredoo breaks ground on three new Data Centres

Ooredoo has begun construction on three new state-of-the-art Data Centres in Barka, Salalah and Sohar to support local businesses and the community in each area by offering world-leading cloud storage, data recovery and cyber security options.

Launching the foundations of the site in Salalah, the CEO, Noor al Sulaiti and CTIO, Dr Ahmed Abdullah al Abri were in attendance with members of Ooredoo's senior management team.

Dr Ahmed said, "Our state of the art data centres mark our progress towards achieving the objectives of Oman's Vision 2040. Each site forms the cornerstone of the modern infrastructure required to meet the requirements of a rapidly-growing



ing digitally-enabled society and the demand for hosting and digital data processing."

In March last year, the company had launched its new flag-

ship Data Centre in Muscat, completing construction well ahead of schedule - a new record for Ooredoo. The centre became fully operational immediately

and is a Tier 3 data centre with a power capacity of 2.5 Megawatts and guaranteeing availability of 99.982%+, according to an internationally-recognised framework.

The Data Centre provides a local solution for hosting and data processing for both Ooredoo and data2cloud, allowing both organisations to deliver an outstanding experience to customers.

Each of the new Data Centres will be rated as Tier 3 and have a capacity of more than 500 racks, complementing the growing range of technical facilities operated by Ooredoo across the country.

The sites in Salalah and Barka will also provide cable landing fa-

cilities to '2Africa' (2AF), the longest subsea cable system ever deployed, and joining a global consortium of communications operators in connecting 33 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe with a submarine cable spanning 45,000km.

Construction is expected to be ready to accept 2Africa equipment by the end of March 2023 and to be fully operational by the end of August 2023. As part of Ooredoo's in-country value initiative, local products and suppliers will be used where possible to support the project, under their 'Oman Products First'.

Once complete, the Data Centres will form a key component in Oman's digital transformation journey.



Malabar Gold expands operations in Bangladesh

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, one of the largest jewellery retailers globally with a strong network of over 285 outlets spread across ten countries is scheduled to open a new manufacturing facility in Modonpur, Bangladesh in partnership with Nitul Niloy group, a leading diversified business conglomerate based in Bangladesh.

The stone laying ceremony of this facility was held on July 28 by MD Sirazul Islam, Executive Chairman, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), in the presence of Abdul Matlub Ahmad, Chairman, Nitul Niloy Group, Shamlal Ahamed, MD - International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, Ameer CMC, Director Finance, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, management team members of both the organisations and well-wishers.

The manufacturing facility, which is being set up in partnership with Nitul Niloy group, a di-

versified business conglomerate in Bangladesh, is the first venture of Malabar Gold and Diamonds into the country.

"We are very excited to start our journey in Bangladesh, a country offering a wide variety of opportunities and we are happy to have Nitul Niloy group as our partner in this journey," said Shamlal Ahamed, MD - International Operations, Malabar Gold and Diamonds.

"With our combined experience and expertise, we hope to replicate our transparent and sustainable business model in the country and turn Bangladesh into a jewellery manufacturing hub for the global audience while contributing positively to the country, its economy and society."

The new facility will have a production capacity of 6,000kg of gold per year with high quality & finish, utilising skilled craftsmen and the latest technologies like casting, CNC and CAD-CAM (3D).

UAE residents 'most adventurous' in world, says recent study

People living in the United Arab Emirates are some of the most adventurous in the world, a new study reveals.

Of 1,847 respondents surveyed in the UAE, 58 per cent of residents and citizens declared they like to explore the world, just behind South Africa who ranked first with 64 per cent.

The State of Travel Today is the world's largest study of travel intentions from leading PR consultancy group, Travel Lifestyle Network (TLN). The research is compiled by travel think tank Thrive and market intelligence firm AudienceNet, from 179,446 respondents in 28 countries during the first quarter of 2022.



When asked which factors impact choosing a destination, distance and familiarity with the country do not deter these avid travellers. Just eight per cent say distance to travel is a consideration to choosing a destination.

The study also revealed only six per cent need to have travelled to a location before or be familiar with it to select their destination and just 13 per cent are fazed by ease of travelling (such as a direct journey, visa

and vaccination requirements).

"Travel is back with a vengeance and in a post-pandemic world, many are ready to travel even further than before to make their bucket list dreams happen," says Isabel Tapp,

Top countries from where the residents typically travel abroad more than once a year

1	UAE	56%
2	Saudi Arabia	51%
2	Singapore	51%
3	Hong Kong	49%
4	China	45%
5	India	44%
6	Israel	39%
7	Ireland	38%
8	Denmark	37%
8	Netherlands	37%

Founder & CEO of AllDetails, the Travel Lifestyle Network's Middle East Agency.

"It's no secret that residents of the UAE are in a unique position to travel, both geographically and with the nation having quickly recovered from the pandemic. With many countries re-opening this year, citizens and residents are ready to discover new destinations and cultural experiences: the world is their oyster."

In line with the other countries surveyed, value for money (32 per cent) and looking forward to a relaxing experience (22 per cent) were the top two contributing factors for picking a destination.

Frequent flyers

UAE residents and citizens are the most likely of all countries surveyed to take a medium or long-haul vacation abroad once a year or more for leisure with 56 per cent saying they typically travel overseas, either on a medium or long-haul flight. Singapore and Saudi Arabia came in equal second with 51 per cent of residents from both countries usually travelling overseas more than once a year.

An insatiable thirst for travel

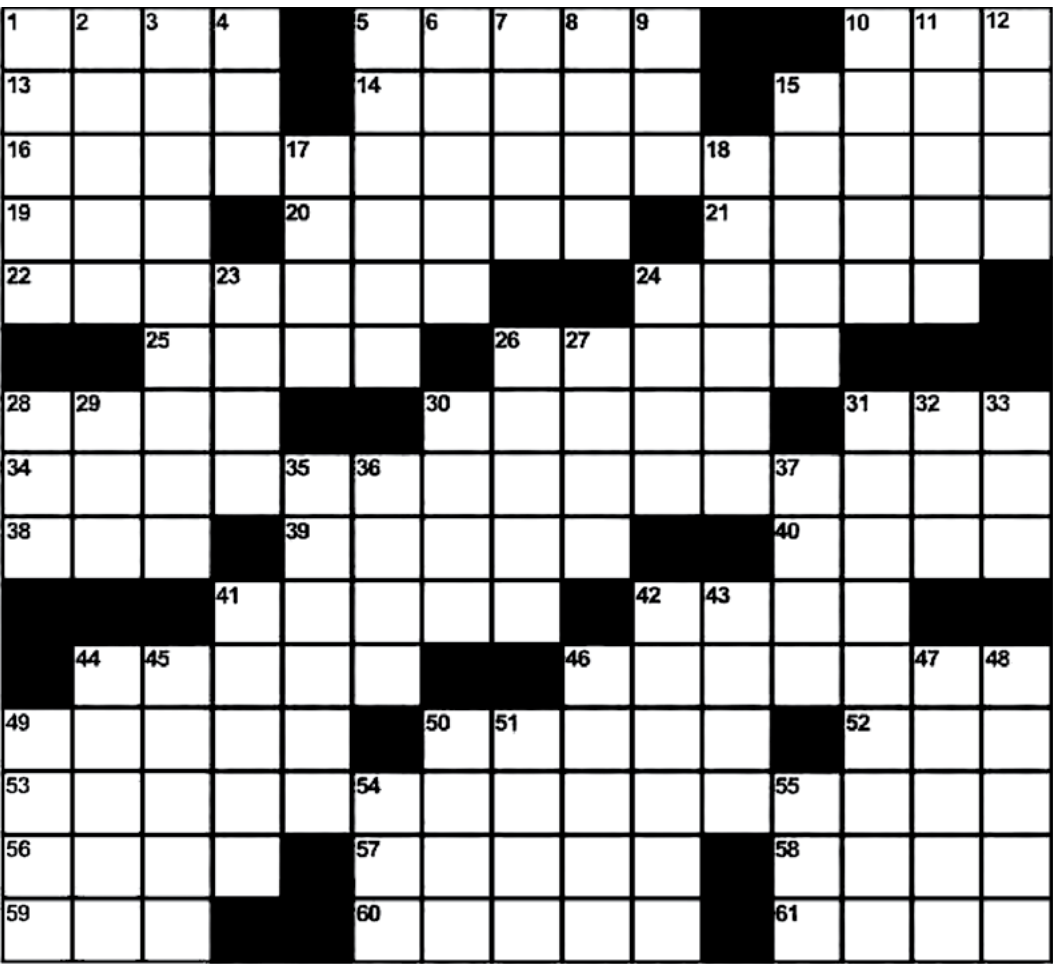
One in three (34 per cent) respondents plan to purchase travel tickets in the next three to six months, while 19 per cent

plan on locking in a holiday abroad. Domestic travel remains popular with 19 per cent planning to book a vacation within the UAE in the next few months.

- ▶ 58% of UAE residents and citizens like to explore the world
- ▶ Just 8% consider distance when choosing a destination
- ▶ UAE #1 country with residents most likely to take a medium or long-haul vacation abroad more than once a year

(Data analysis, supplied by AudienceNet, was based on 179,446 people in 28 countries who participated in the survey, conducted during the first quarter of 2022.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1) Football part
5) _ lazuli (blue mineral)
10) Burst open
13) Annoying smell
14) Plain, in Spain
15) "Whale" or "herring" attachment
16) Wide-ranging appeal
19) Withdraw (with "out")
20) Telltale signs
21) NBA legends Archibald and Thurmond
22) Bouillabaisse cooking vessel
24) Fee for grazing cattle
25) Does and ewes
26) "Curb Your Enthusiasm" star
28) As many as
30) Former Russian leader
31) "What did I tell you!"
34) More than merely owing
38) "... Bojangles and_ dance for you"
39) Circulatory trunk
40) Silver State destina-

tion
41) English Lit assignment
42) Con's knife
44) Prepare Parmesan cheese
46) Monster in Greek mythology
49) Related on the mother's side
50) Arrogant
52) San Francisco's_ Hill
53) Like a soldier's gear
56) Prayer finisher
57) Dwelling
58) Big name in cereal
59) Animal lair
60) Pre-stereo recordings
61) Bugs on a hill

DOWN

1) Advertising eye-catchers
2) Adroit
3) Called into question
4) "..._he drove out of sight ..."
5) Docile creatures
6) Host before Paar and Carson
7) Advil target
8) Getaway spots
9) Barroom elbow-bender

10) Erato's group
11) Genesis
12) Domesticated animals
15) Make pigtailed
17) It may be skipped
18) Wankel's creation
23) "Stop right there!"
24) All fired up
26) Object of worship
27) King of Siam's employee
28) "Disgusting!"
29) "Before," if before
30) Constellation containing Vega
31) Eisenhower opponent
32) Suffix for "Hallow"
33) Tokyo, previously
35) Winery employee
36) Finish in last place
37) Cup part
41) Finished, as a meal
42) Young hogs (Var.)
43) Stereo system of yore
44) Dwarf of folklore
45) Black bird
46) Upscale living quarters, briefly
47) Awaken rudely
48) Acts as a lookout

49) "Heavens to Betsy!"
50) Pulpit of yore
51) Boxer Spinks

54) "Miss Saigon" setting, briefly
55) Healthy vacation spot

NOTE PAD

PALP FLUME YEGG
ASIA OAKUM ORAL
SHAPEONES COURSE
TYRANT HER SHE
WEBB YETI
ART ARC DEDUCT
SOWS TAOS GENRE
SUIT THE OCCASION
AGREE SERA TONE
MELEES FEEL NET
LOTS ELAN
ALE FIT EDITOR
FIT OF GENEROSITY
ANNA MAORI ARIA
REAR ADDED NESS

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You're a fireball, as anyone who's known you for more than a few minutes will most certainly attest. So when you receive a note, call, or meaningful glance from across the room, being who you are, you'll do what you do best: react impulsively. For most of us, that might mean a cautious, polite greeting or maybe a nice, discreet, handshake. Not you. You'll want to know what time you should pick them up tomorrow night, and, as per, it will work like a charm.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

When you love someone, you put up with a thousand things you'd never tolerate from anyone else. So when you're in the company of the usual suspects, and a family member, sweetheart, or best friend happens to start retelling a story you know so well you could absolutely recite it in your sleep, just excuse yourself and let them have their fun. You can regale everyone the next time.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Monotony, habit, or anything that even remotely resembles routine will be absolutely intolerable to you now, so intolerable that you'll take chances and risks regardless of how iffy the odds are just to do something new and different. Oddly enough, it's a memory from the past, one that reminds you of how refreshing, exciting, and spontaneous it was to do exactly what you wanted, regardless of the aftermath, that will most likely inspire you to do all this. Go figure.

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

There's only one way for you to live your life: by doing what's right. You follow the rules, dot the i's, cross the t's, and make sure each and every authority figure you encounter knows how much respect you honestly believe they deserve. So when news comes along now about something you've been hoping for so much you were afraid to even talk about it, well, there's really no need for you to be surprised. You've earned it. Enjoy.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

You're known for modesty, prudence, and discretion, so once you're gifted with a secret, keeping it is something you take very seriously, and that goes double for confiding one. At the moment, however, you've been put in a position you're not fond of. You might need to tell someone something you never thought you'd utter to a single soul. There's only one thing to do, and it all comes down to what you know in your heart is right.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

If anyone loves the ritual of making something official by gathering around a long conference table on the 87th floor to set down signatures on reams of paper with all parties concerned and their legal representatives in attendance, well, let's face it, that would be you. So when that circumstance comes along, you'll be so darned tickled that you'll hardly be able to contain yourself. Try to stay calm enough to finish each and every last signature legibly.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You're probably in the mood for an uncomplicated, lighthearted evening out with interesting, fun-loving friends. As notoriously sharp and clever as you are, however, there's always someone out there who wants to see if they can outdo you in the department of wit. They're destined to lose, of course. That's a given. The type of verbal thrashing you give them, however, is up to you. Just enough to keep your title intact, or do they deserve to be embarrassed?

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

If anyone can keep a room full of people happy (at least one roomful), it's you. Truth be told, a roomful is nothing. You can bring up a subject at a conference of a thousand that will bring everyone together in a spirit of camaraderie so strong not one of them will be able to remember the last time they felt it. It's a gift, and you need to use it now. Just wait and see how well your gift makes a certain situation turn out.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Many of us find electronic devices annoying. Well, not all of them. Only the ones that ring, beep, or vibrate at exactly the wrong moment, specifically and intentionally to interrupt whatever we're doing. Yes, even you, the sign that most adores electronic equipment, can even feel that way sometimes. Now? Every beep, vibration, or ring will be welcome, because on the other end just might be the person you've been waiting to hear from. Or someone even better.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

All of us here on planet number three are in the mood to make contact with someone from a far-off place, someone whose smile, wit, or simple presence we've missed for far too long. You're no different, and you know exactly the person you want to make that contact with too. Why not do it now? You know they'll be delighted to hear your voice, and afterwards you might be able to rekindle the original fire.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

We all get chances to shine in the eyes of the authority figures whose decisions can either make or break our careers, but those chances don't come along all that often. One of those rare opportunities is on its way to you right now, so make sure those world famous antennae of yours are operating on high and that you're not distracted by anyone or anything. That said, congratulations will soon be in order.

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Meeting someone new always brings with it a medley of feelings: apprehension, excitement, and anticipation, for starters. Most of those feelings are carryovers from the past, inspired by memories that were either very good or very not so good. At any rate, you're due for some of those to come along now, of the entirely pleasant variety. Don't be surprised if this is the start of a new friendship that won't be going anywhere for a good, long while.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. The last beheading after death carried out in Britain (which was part of the penalty of "hanging, drawing and quartering"), followed conviction for treason of whom?

A. William Joyce, Lord Haw-Haw, 1946
B. Cato Street conspirators, 1820
C. Anne Boleyn, 1536
D. Sir Roger Casement, 1916

02. What is the feature on the Moon which is named after the first spacecraft to reach the surface of the Moon, and the first human-made object to make contact with another celestial body?

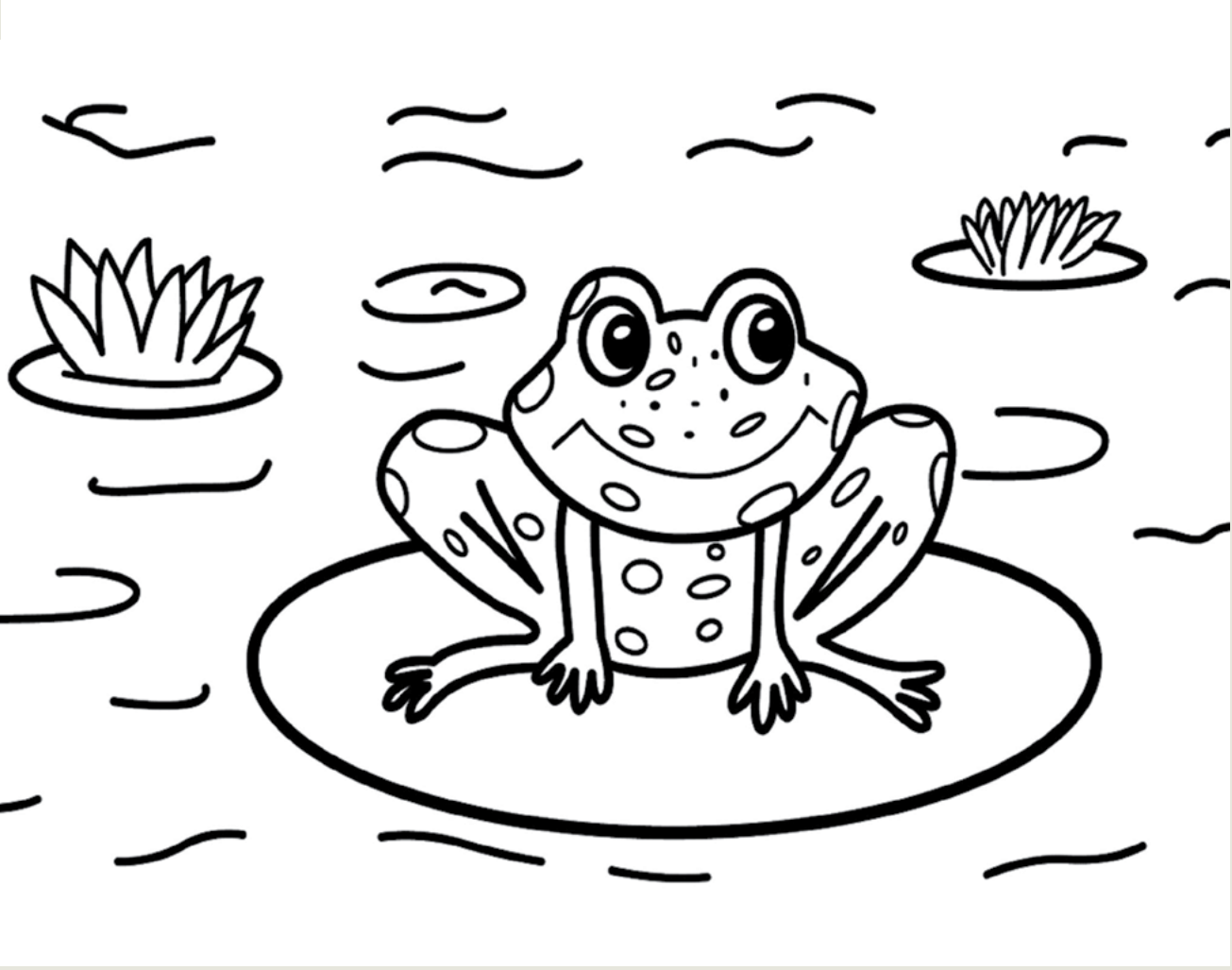
A. Grail Impact
B. Lunik Bay
C. Bay of Success
D. Korolev Valley

03. Which railway has the highest line in South America and the second highest in the world, second only to the one which connects Qinghai in China and Lhasa in Tibet?

A. Tren a las Nubes, Argentina
B. Ferrovias Central, Peru
C. Trans-Andean Railway, Ecuador
D. Ferrocarril de Girardot, Colombia
Correct Answer: Ferrovias Central, Peru

Answers: 1. B 2. B 3. B

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

D	E	S	U
B	A	T	E
H	Qu	E	K
A	E	A	C

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

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

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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

Afghans cast doubt on Kabul killing of Al Qaeda chief

Kabul, Afghanistan - Many Afghans expressed shock or doubt on Tuesday that Al Qaeda's chief had been killed in Kabul by a US drone strike, saying they couldn't believe Ayman Al Zawahiri had been hiding in their midst.

"It's just propaganda," Fahim Shah, 66, a resident of the Afghan capital, told AFP.

Late on Monday, US President Joe Biden announced Zawahiri's assassination, saying 'justice has been delivered' to the Egyptian with a US\$25mn bounty on his head.

A senior US official said the 71-year-old was on the balcony of a three-storey house in the upmarket Sherpur neighbourhood when targeted with two Hellfire missiles shortly after dawn on Sunday.

"We have experienced such propaganda in the past and there was never anything in it," Shah said. "In reality, I don't think he was killed here."

The Taliban admitted earlier on Tuesday that the US had carried out a drone strike, but gave no details of casualties - and did not name Zawahiri, who was considered a key plotter of the 9/11 attacks on the United States. On Sunday, the interior ministry had denied reports of a



People walk through a road at the Sherpur area in Kabul on Tuesday (AFP)

drone strike, but Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on Tuesday that was because an investigation was underway. Kabul resident Abdul Kabir said he heard the strike on Sunday morning, but still called on the United States to prove who was killed.

"They should show to the people and to the world that 'we had hit this man and here is the evidence'," Kabir said. "We think they killed somebody else and announced it was the Al Qaeda chief... there are many other places he could be hiding - in Pakistan, or even in Iraq."

The strike is sure to further sour already bitter relations between Washington and the Taliban, which pledged to stop Afghanistan from being a sanctuary for militants as part of the agreement that led to the US troop withdrawal last year.

University student Mohammad Bilal was another who thought it unlikely Zawahiri had been living in Kabul.

"This is a terrorist group and I do not think they will send their leader to Afghanistan," Bilal said.

"Leaders of most terrorist groups, including the Taliban, were either living in Pakistan or in the UAE," he said.

AFP



This file photo shows Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi greeting supporters during a rally in the western city of Kermanshah on July 14, this year (AFP)

Iran's Raisi plans to address UN in NY next month

Tehran, Iran - Iran's ultraconservative President Ebrahim Raisi plans to travel to New York for the UN General Assembly next month despite US sanctions against him, the government's spokesman said on Tuesday.

"The preliminary planning has been done for the president's attendance at the UN General Assembly session," Ali Bahadori-Jahromi told a weekly press briefing.

Raisi, who has been under US sanctions since November 2019 for 'complicity in serious human rights violations', missed last year's General Assembly because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A pre-recorded video of his address was played to the meeting instead.

When Washington added his name to its blacklist of Iranian officials, Raisi was still judiciary chief. He became president in June 2021.

Washington accuses him of playing a leading role in mass executions of detained leftists in 1988 while he was chief prosecutor of the Tehran revolutionary court. Raisi has denied the allegations on two occasions - in 2018 and 2020 - insisting he played no role in the executions, although he lauded an order he said was handed down by the Islamic republic's founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to proceed with the purge.

The General Assembly opens in New York on September 13.

AFP

Israel army closes areas near Gaza citing 'reprisals risk'

A 17-year-old Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli forces during a late Monday raid in West Bank district of Jenin

Jenin, Palestinian Territories - Israel's army closed areas near the Gaza border to civilians on Tuesday, citing a risk of reprisals, following the overnight arrest of two senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad members, the military and Palestinian sources said.

A 17-year-old Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli forces during a late Monday raid in the flash-point West Bank district of Jenin.

Islamic Jihad identified the teenager as Dirar al-Kafrayni, and said he was a member of the group and 'our heroic martyr'.

The army said it had operated alongside police, who arrested 'two wanted terror suspects'.

A Palestinian security source, who requested anonymity, told AFP that one of those detained was Bassem al-Saadi, a senior figure in Islamic Jihad's political wing in the West Bank.

The source identified the second person detained as Saadi's son-in-law, a Jenin-based fundraiser for the militant group.

The Israeli military said it was preventing civilian access to areas near Gaza 'due to a direct threat'.

"After terrorist activities were



Palestinian women mourn by the body of Dhurar al-Kafrini, reportedly killed during clashes with Israeli forces in the Jenin refugee camp, during his funeral at the camp in the occupied West Bank, on Tuesday (AFP)

After terrorist activities were identified with Palestinian Islamic Jihad, it was decided to block off areas and routes adjacent to the Gaza Strip security fence

ISRAEL ARMY

identified with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terrorist organisation, it was decided to block off areas and routes adjacent to the Gaza Strip security fence," an army statement said.

Israel also closed its only bor-

der crossing for people entering or leaving Gaza, while the government said Prime Minister Yair Lapid was reviewing security.

As news of the deadly raid spread, crowds began to gather in Jenin refugee camp and the

nearby city of Nablus, as supporters voiced solidarity with Islamic Jihad. "We declare alertness and raise the readiness of our mujahideen (fighters)," the group said in a statement late on Monday.

Saadi was injured by an Israeli army dog during his arrest, the Palestinian source said.

Home to some 2.3mn Palestinians, Gaza has been under Israeli blockade since 2007 when Islamist group Hamas ousted forces loyal to Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas.

Islamic Jihad has a strong presence in Gaza, regularly using it as a launchpad for rocket attacks against Israel.

The latest unrest comes amid rising violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

At least 55 Palestinians have been killed since late March, mostly in the West Bank. They have included suspected militants and also non-combatants, among them Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, a Palestinian-American dual national.

AFP

Two dead in California's wildfire

Yreka, US - Firefighters faced 'extremely dangerous' conditions on Monday as they battled to save a community of 8,000 residents, with lightning strikes threatening to worsen a blaze that has already killed at least two people and become California's biggest fire of the year.

Hundreds of personnel were involved in the fight against the fast-moving McKinney Fire, which has torn through more than 55,000 acres near the border with Oregon, forcing thousands from their homes.

The National Weather Service meanwhile issued a warning because of the threat of dry lightning - powerful electrical strikes that come without any of the desperately needed rain.

AFP

Conjoined twins separated with help of virtual reality in Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Conjoined twins born in Brazil with a fused head and brain have been separated in what doctors described on Monday as the most complex surgery of its kind, which they prepared for using virtual reality.

Arthur and Bernardo Lima were born in 2018 in the state of Roraima in northern Brazil as craniopagus twins, an extremely rare condition in which the siblings are fused at the cranium.

Joined at the top of the head for nearly four years - most of that spent in a hospital room outfitted with a custom bed - the brothers are now able to look each other in the face for the first time, after a series of nine operations culminating in a marathon 23-hour surgery to separate them.

London-based medical charity Gemini Untwined, which helped carry out the procedure, described it as the 'most challeng-



Brazilian conjoined twins Bernardo and Arthur with their parents after the twins' operation at the Instituto Estadual do Cerebro Paulo Niemeyer (IECPN) hospital in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (AFP)

ing and complex separation to date', given that the boys shared several vital veins.

"It was the most difficult, complex, challenging surgery of my career," said neurosurgeon Gabriel Mufarrej of the Paulo Niemeyer State Brain Institute (IECPN) in Rio de Janeiro, where the procedure was performed.

"No one believed it was possible at first. Saving them both was a historic accomplishment."

Members of the medical team, which included nearly 100 staff, prepared for the delicate final stages of the surgery on June 7 and 9 with the help of virtual reality.

Using brain scans to create a digital map of the boys' shared cranium, surgeons practiced for the procedure in a trans-Atlantic, virtual-reality trial surgery executed in both Britain and Brazil.

British neurosurgeon Noor ul

Owase Jeelani, the lead surgeon for Gemini Untwined, called the prep session 'space-age stuff'.

"It's just wonderful, it's really great to see the anatomy and do the surgery before you actually put the children at any risk," he told British news agency PA.

"To do it in virtual reality was just really man-on-Mars stuff."

Pictures and videos released by medical staff showed the boys lying side-by-side post-surgery, little Arthur reaching out to touch his brother's hand.

The boys are still recovering, and may need further procedures as they develop, doctors said. Speech is difficult for them, and Bernardo has a motor deficit on the right-hand side, Mufarrej said.

"They will take some time to get to the point where we want them to be. But I believe in them," he said.

AFP

China warns against Pelosi's Taiwan visit

China says US will ‘pay the price’ if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visits Taiwan during her Asia trip

Beijing, China - The United States will ‘pay the price’ if House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visits Taiwan during her Asia trip, China warned on Tuesday, as tensions between the two superpowers continued to soar.

The prospect of Pelosi going to Taipei, which would be the highest-profile visit by a US official in 25 years, has triggered increasingly bellicose warnings from Beijing that have set the region on edge.

Pelosi has yet to officially confirm if she will land in Taiwan as part of an ongoing Asia tour but US and Taiwanese media have reported it will happen. “The US side will bear the responsibility and pay the price for undermining China’s sovereign security interests,” foreign ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said at a regular press briefing in Beijing.

China considers self-ruled, democratic Taiwan as its territory and has vowed to one day seize the island, by force if necessary. It tries to keep Taiwan isolated on the world stage and opposes countries having official exchanges with Taipei.

In a call with US President Joe Biden last week, Chinese President Xi Jinping warned the United States against ‘playing with fire’ on Taiwan.

While the Biden administration is understood to be opposed to a Taiwan stop, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said Pelosi was entitled to go where she pleased.

“The speaker has the right to visit Taiwan,” he told reporters on Monday. “There is no reason for Beijing to turn a potential



Malaysia's Speaker of the Dewan Rakyat, Azhar Azizan Harun (right), posing for pictures with US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi at the Parliament House in Kuala Lumpur on Tuesday (AFP)

visit consistent with longstanding US policies into some sort of crisis.” The last House Speaker to visit Taiwan was Newt Gingrich in 1997.

Kirby cited intelligence that China was preparing possible military provocations.

He said Pelosi was travelling on a military aircraft and that while Washington did not fear a direct attack, it ‘raises the stakes of a miscalculation’.

Kirby reiterated, however, that US policy was unchanged toward Taiwan.

This means support for its self-ruling government, while diplomatically recognising Beijing over Taipei and opposing a formal independence declaration by Taiwan or a forceful takeover by China.

All eyes on Taiwan
Pelosi arrived in Kuala Lumpur

on Tuesday where she met Malaysian Prime Minister Ismail Sabri and Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah.

AFP journalists saw Pelosi coming out of a hotel in the Malaysian capital and entering an SUV. Her motorcade then departed under heavy security.

Press access around Pelosi has been tightly restricted so far and limited to a handful of short statements confirming meet-

ings with Malaysian and Singaporean officials.

Her itinerary includes stops in South Korea and Japan - but the prospect of a Taiwan trip has dominated attention.

Taipei has remained silent on the prospect of a Pelosi visit.

Multiple Taiwanese media outlets carried comments from deputy parliament speaker Tsai Chi-chang saying Pelosi was ‘very likely’ to visit in

the coming days.

And the *Liberty Times* newspaper cited unnamed sources as saying the US House speaker would land on Tuesday night, then meet President Tsai Ing-wen the next day before departing in the afternoon.

Taiwan’s 23mn people have long lived with the possibility of an invasion, but that threat has intensified under Xi.

AFP

Russia sees potential Pelosi visit ‘provocative’

Moscow, Russia - Moscow on Tuesday denounced a potential visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan as a provocation, expressing full solidarity with ally China.

“What is connected with this tour and a possible visit to Taiwan is a pure provocation,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

He said the potential visit was leading to an ‘increase in tension’ in the region and accused Washington of choosing ‘the path of confrontation’.

“We want to emphasise once again that we are absolutely in solidarity with China, its attitude towards the problem is understandable and absolutely justified.”

Russian foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova also accused the United States of being provocative over the potential visit.

“Washington is bringing destabilisation to the world. Not a single resolved conflict in recent decades, but many provoked ones,” she said on social media.

AFP

Hong Kong bans eating at annual food expo

Hong Kong, China - Visitors to Hong Kong’s annual exhibition of global gourmet food will once again not be allowed to sample the delicacies due to coronavirus curbs, the organiser said on Tuesday.

Tens of thousands of visitors and hundreds of exhibitors are expected at the five-day Food Expo starting next Thursday in the city’s Convention and Exhibition Centre. But for the second year in a row, there will not be any tasting areas and all attendees must keep their masks on due to public health restrictions, according to Sophia Chong, acting CEO of the expo organiser, the Trade Development Council.

“We understand that visitors would like to taste the samples,” Chong said. “We hope we can resume this arrangement after the pandemic, when it’s safe and hygienic to do it.”

The decision was announced a day after the government said fans at November’s Hong Kong Sevens will be allowed to drink but not eat in the stands, with masks having to be worn between sips. Chong said they were not concerned by the measures’ impacts on the exhibition as it would be the second year of the tasting ban. “The number of exhibitors participating in this year’s Food Expo actually exceeded that of last year,” Chong said.

A new round of HK\$2,000 (US\$255) consumption vouchers will be distributed to most of the 7.5mn Hong Kong residents from Sunday, which is expected by the expo organiser to boost visitors’ appetites for shopping.

AFP

Sri Lanka dismisses Indian concerns on Chinese ship

Colombo, Sri Lanka - Sri Lanka on Tuesday brushed aside Indian concerns over a scheduled visit by a Chinese ship, saying it was coming only to refuel and replenish supplies.

The research and survey ship Yuan Wang 5 is due to dock in the Chinese-run Hambantota Port in southern Sri Lanka on August 11, according to analytics website MarineTraffic.

Indian media reports said that New Delhi was worried the vessel would be used to spy on its activities and that it had lodged a complaint with Colombo. It is a dual-use spy vessel, employed for space and satellite tracking and with specific usage in intercontinental ballistic missile launches, according to Indian

broadcaster CNN-News18.

Sri Lankan government spokesman Bandula Gunawardena said that the cabinet discussed the ship’s visit on Monday and that it would still be allowed to dock.

“Both India and China are helping us at this very crucial time when we are facing an unprecedented economic crisis,” Gunawardena said.

“The President (Ranil Wickremesinghe) informed the cabinet that this matter will be diplomatically resolved by talking to all sides. Both are important friends.”

The vessel is to spend about a week at Hambantota taking in fuel and other supplies and will not undertake any work while in Sri Lankan waters, Gunawardena said.

AFP

Pakistan election commission says Khan’s party accepted illegal funds

Islamabad, Pakistan - Pakistan’s ex-premier Imran Khan’s party accepted millions of dollars in illegal funds from foreign individuals and groups, the election commission ruled on Tuesday.

The case dates back to 2014 when a disgruntled founding member of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) filed a case against his party leadership accusing it of financial irregularities.

The Election Commission Pakistan found that Khan’s party concealed 16 bank accounts and accepted donations from foreigners or foreign groups based in Australia, Canada, the UAE and the Cayman Islands.

Pakistani law bars political parties from receiving funds and donations from foreign individuals and companies. The commission also said that financial details submitted by Khan were ‘found to be grossly inaccurate’.



Akbar S Babar had filed the case against his party leadership (AFP)

Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif - who came into power in April after Khan’s ouster - said the commission’s verdict showed ‘yet again that he (Khan) is a certified liar’.

“(The) Nation should ponder over the implications of his politics funded by foreigners,” Sharif said in a tweet on Tuesday. The

The Commission found that the ex-premier’s party concealed 16 bank accounts and accepted donations from foreign groups based in Australia, Canada, UAE and Cayman Islands

party has denied the accusations.

Responding to the decision, senior PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry said the party had taken funds from ‘overseas Pakistanis’, not foreign nationals.

“Overseas Pakistanis are the backbone of Pakistan’s economy, and we would continue to rely on them for funding,” Chaudhry told

reporters. Cricket star-turned-politician Khan swept into power in 2018 thanks to an electorate weary of the dynastic politics of the country’s two major parties, with the popular former sports star promising to sweep away decades of entrenched corruption and cronyism.

But in April, he was kicked out following a no-confidence vote - brought down in part by his failure to rectify the country’s dire economic situation, including its crippling debt, shrinking foreign currency reserves and soaring inflation. He also reportedly fell out with the country’s powerful military.

Khan has since staged a series of rallies, touting a claim he was pushed out of office in a ‘foreign conspiracy’ and heaping pressure on a coalition of former opposition parties now in power.

AFP

China population to begin shrinking by 2025, say officials

Beijing, China - China’s population will begin to shrink by 2025, officials have said, as family sizes grow smaller and citizens age.

The world’s most-populous country has been grappling with a looming demographic crisis as it faces a rapidly ageing workforce, slowing economy and its weakest population growth in decades.

And although officials relaxed the nation’s strict ‘one-child policy’ in 2016 and last year allowed couples to have three children, the birth rate has plunged to a record low.

“The growth rate of the total



A woman pushes a trolley with twins along a street in Beijing on Tuesday (AFP)

population has slowed down significantly, and it will enter a stage of negative growth in the ‘14th Five-Year Plan’ period,” the National Health Commission said on Monday, referring to the period between 2021 and 2025.

In January, authorities said that forecasts expected the population to enter zero growth ‘or even negative growth’ in that five-year span.

“Presently, our country’s policy system for childbirth support is not perfect, and there is a big gap with population development and the people’s expectations,” the NHC said in its latest report.

The total fertility rate has dropped below 1.3 in recent years, it added, while the country is expected to enter a stage of severe ageing around 2035, with more than 30 per cent of the population older than 60.

Families are also becoming smaller, ‘weakening’ the functions of pension and childcare, the health commission said, calling for improving child-raising support and for policies on housing, education and taxation to help reduce burdens on families. Authorities in some parts of China have already started introducing family-friendly policies in a bid to combat the slow-

ing birth rate.

The eastern city of Hangzhou announced on Monday that families with three children would be able to borrow 20 per cent more than the maximum limit when applying for housing provident fund loans for the first time.

Other cities like Nanchang and Changsha have also rolled out supportive policies, according to state media.

Higher costs of living and a cultural shift as people grow used to smaller families have been cited as reasons behind the lower number of babies.

AFP

Ukrainian grain shipment heads to Istanbul

The vessel carrying the long-awaited consignment is expected in Istanbul after midnight, Ankara said on Tuesday

Kyiv, Ukraine - The first shipment of Ukrainian grain to leave Odessa since Russia's invasion is expected in Istanbul 'after midnight', Ankara said on Tuesday, under a landmark deal to lift Moscow's naval blockade in the Black Sea.

As the cargo vessel carrying the long-awaited consignment hugged the Bulgarian coastline, Kyiv announced it had begun mandatory evacuations from the war-torn Donetsk region at the heart of the Kremlin's gruelling assault.

In Moscow, Russia's supreme court labelled Ukraine's Azov regiment a 'terrorist' organisation in a move that could pave the way for fighters captured by the Kremlin to face lengthy jail terms.

The Sierra Leone-registered ship, Razoni, set sail from Odessa for Lebanon on Monday under an accord brokered by Turkey and the United Nations aimed at getting millions of tonnes of trapped produce to world markets and curb a global food crisis.

Turkish officials said it would arrive in Istanbul 'after midnight'.

The ship had cautiously made its way through a specially cleared corridor in the mine-in-



The Sierra Leone-flagged dry cargo ship Razoni, carrying a cargo of 26,000 tonnes of corn, departing from the Black Sea port of Odessa on Monday (AFP)

fest waters of the Black Sea.

The Marine Traffic website showed the vessel - which is carrying 26,000 tonnes of maize - off the coast of Bulgaria by 1200 GMT.

It will be inspected by a special coordination centre involving representatives of Ukraine, Rus-

sia, Turkey and the UN at sea in the mouth of the Bosphorus before being allowed to progress.

The five-month halt of deliveries from Ukraine - one of the world's biggest grain exporters - has contributed to soaring food prices, hitting the world's poorest nations especially hard.

Kyiv says at least 16 more grain ships are waiting to depart. "Let's wait and see how the agreement works and whether security will be really guaranteed," Zelensky said in a video address late on Monday.

The breakthrough pact signed in July was the first significant ac-

cord involving Ukraine and Russia since Moscow invaded its neighbour on February 24.

Donetsk evacuations

Yet Russia has continued to pound cities and towns across Ukraine's sprawling front line.

Kyiv said it had started

mandatory evacuations from the eastern region of Donetsk bearing the brunt of the Russian offensive after Zelensky urged the estimated 200,000 remaining residents to leave.

Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said a train carrying 'women, children,

elderly people, many people with reduced mobility' arrived in the central city of Kropyvnytskyi on Tuesday morning.

More than 130 people were evacuated from the Donetsk region, governor Pavel Kyrlylenko said.

Officials have said they want to get residents out of the battered region before the start of winter as gas pipes for heating have been severed.

In the south of the country, the head of Ukraine's Kryviy Rig military administration said Russian shelling had killed two civilians in a minibus trying to leave the Moscow-controlled Kherson region. Oleksander Vilkul said two other passengers were in serious condition in hospital with burns.

The mayor of the city of Mykolaiv, the closest to where Ukrainian forces are looking to launch a counter-offensive in Kherson, said Russian strikes had damaged a university dormitory.

He said in a briefing that 403 people had been killed in his region since the invasion but added that a looming Ukraine counter-offensive for the neighbouring Kherson region 'will result in a decrease of shelling'.

Ukraine was bolstered by more supplies of Western arms - particularly long-range artillery - as it looks launch a major push in the south to retake Kherson.

The United States announced a new tranche of weapons worth US\$550mn for Ukraine's forces, including ammunition for increasingly important rocket launchers and artillery guns. "Our artillerymen are ready to turn night into day to expel the Russian invaders," Ukraine's Defence Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said. AFP

Kentucky flooding death toll rises to 37



A Kentucky National Guard flight crew take part in flood relief efforts in response to a declared state of emergency in eastern Kentucky (AFP)

Jackson, US - The death toll from flooding in eastern Kentucky rose to 37 on Monday as more rain hampered recovery operations and possible severe weather overnight threatened to provoke further damage.

"We are ending the day with more heartbreaking news out of Eastern Kentucky. We can confirm the death toll has now risen to 37, with so many more still missing," tweeted Andy Beshear, governor of the south-central US state. "Let us pray for these families and come together to wrap our arms around our fellow Kentuckians," he added.

Beshear has said he expects the death toll to continue to rise as search and rescue teams fan out across flood-hit areas and recover more bodies.

Their efforts were hampered by more rain on Monday, with a series of new storms forecast to arrive overnight. "If things weren't hard enough on the people of this region, they're getting rain right now," Beshear said earlier in the day. "There is severe storm potential today in all of the impacted areas.

"That is just not right."

The National Weather Service issued flood watches for most of eastern Kentucky for the evening and into Tuesday morning, warning that 'a complex of storms is expected to move over the region tonight'. "Heavy rain rates which could lead to flash flooding along with severe thunderstorms are possible," the weather agency tweeted. Last week, some areas in eastern Kentucky received more than eight inches (20cm) of rain in a 24-hour period, provoking unprecedented flash flooding.

The water level of the North Fork of the Kentucky River at Whitesburg rose to a staggering 20 feet within hours, well above its previous record of 14.7 feet.

Some areas in the mountainous Appalachia region are still inaccessible following the flooding that turned roads into rivers, washed out bridges and swept away houses. The floods hit a region of Kentucky that was already suffering from grinding poverty - driven by the decline of the coal industry that was the heart of its economy. AFP

Texas man gets seven years for Capitol riot

Washington, US - A Texas militia member was sentenced to more than seven years in prison on Monday, the longest jail term yet for a participant in the January 6 attack on the US Capitol by supporters of former president Donald Trump.

Guy Reffitt, 49, was convicted in March of bringing a gun to Washington, interfering with police and impeding an official proceeding - the certification by Congress of Democrat Joe Biden's victory in the November 2020 presidential election. Reffitt, a member of a right-wing militia called the Texas Three Percenters, was also found guilty of obstruction

Guy Reffitt came to the Capitol armed, and contributed to many assaults on law enforcement officers

MATTHEW GRAVES

for threatening his teenaged son and daughter if they spoke to law enforcement about his involvement in the attack on the Capitol.

Reffitt's then 18-year-old son did go to the FBI despite his father's warning that 'traitors get

shot' and delivered emotional testimony against his father in court.

US District Judge Dabney Friedrich sentenced Reffitt to 87 months in prison, the stiffest sentence meted out to a Capitol riot defendant so far.

Two men who pleaded guilty to assaulting police officers were sentenced previously to 63 months in prison.

US Attorney Matthew Graves said Reffitt's sentence 'holds him accountable for his violent, unconscionable conduct'. "Guy Reffitt came to the Capitol on Jan. 6 armed and determined to instigate violence," Graves said in a statement. "He

and others contributed to the many assaults on law enforcement officers that day, putting countless more people - including legislators - at risk."

Reffitt, an oil industry worker from Wylie, Texas, was the first person to go on trial on charges stemming from the January 6, 2021 attack on Congress.

Dozens of other participants in the Capitol riot have been sentenced after entering into plea agreements.

Video of Reffitt confronting police on the steps of the Capitol and urging on the pro-Trump crowd was played for the jury during his trial. AFP

Six killed in chopper crash in Pakistan

Islamabad, Pakistan - Six Pakistan servicemen including a senior commander were killed in a helicopter crash during flood relief operations in southwestern Pakistan, the military confirmed on Tuesday.

Civilian authorities depend heavily on the army during natural calamities such as the floods which have swamped parts of the country this monsoon season.

The helicopter was reported missing in Balochistan on Monday night with six passengers and crew - including one of the army's top commanders, Lieutenant-General Sarfraz Ali. AFP

Scientists call for more research into 'climate endgame'

Paris, France - The world must prepare for a 'climate endgame' to better understand and plan for the potentially catastrophic impacts of global heating that governments have yet to consider, scientists warned on Tuesday.

Climate models that can predict the extent of global warming depending on greenhouse gas emissions are increasingly sophisticated and provide policymakers with an accurate trajectory of global temperature rises.

What is less well explored is the cascading impact of certain events, such as crop failures and infrastructure loss due to extreme weather events, which are made likelier to occur with every degree of warming.

Researchers at the University of Cambridge and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) outlined what is currently known about 'catastrophic outcomes' and found gaping knowledge gaps.



Members of the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) check the level of the Yser river amid an intense drought in the country in Herzelee, northern France on Tuesday (AFP)

Writing in the journal the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, they proposed an international research agenda to help governments plan for 'bad-to-worst cases'.

These included four main areas of concern - what the authors termed the 'four horseman' of climate change: famine and malnutrition, extreme weather, conflict, and vector-borne dis-

eases. "Irreversible and potentially catastrophic risks caused by human induced climate change must be factored into our planning and actions," said Johan Rockstrom, PIK director and a

study co-author. He said that the more research is done on Earth's climate tipping points - such as the irreversible melting of the ice caps or the Amazon rainforest turning from a carbon sink to source - showed the ever-greater need to factor in high-risk scenarios into climate modelling.

"Key is to do the math of disaster, in order to avoid it," he said.

The authors pointed out that successive UN climate science reports have mainly focused on the predicted effects of 1.5C-2C of warming and largely discounted the possibility of more excessive temperature rises.

Government plans put Earth on course to rise as much as 2.7C this century, a far cry from the 1.5-C cap envisaged in the 2015 Paris climate accord.

The study suggested that a scientific disposition to 'err on the side of least drama' led to a lack of focus on potential impacts at 3C of warming or higher. AFP

LUNCH ON TIME

Ssssh... have sushi!

WORKING IN A SUSHI RESTAURANT IN EASTERN UKRAINE IS A CHALLENGE UNPARALLELED. FOR THE STAFF OF 'WOKA', WAR IS NOT A DETERRENT TO SERVE LUNCH ON TIME

Working in a sushi restaurant in eastern Ukraine, Igor Besukh turns up the music to drown out the sound of air raid sirens as he prepares the next order.

But the music could not mask the deafening sound of a missile that struck central Kramatorsk on Friday, landing in the city's Peace Square near the town hall, culture centre and the sushi bar where Besukh works.

The restaurant is one of the few still open in the city, only some 20km from the frontline with Russian troops, in the industrial Donbas region that Russia is attempting to conquer.

When they heard the blast, the employees of 'Woka', a restaurant with red lacquered walls and Asian designs, quickly moved to a shelter.

They re-emerged 20 minutes later to examine the damage. All the windows and doors were broken despite being boarded up with plywood panels. They cleaned up the debris and continued preparing the orders waiting to be delivered.

There were no casualties following the strike that hit at around 8:00pm but the impact shattered the windows of several buildings nearby.

"It was a loud noise. We didn't expect it, of course. I was scared," says the 23-year-old chef with tattoo-covered arms.

Coming back to work the next day was not easy, he admits, however "war is war, but lunch must be served on time," he says, quoting a popular saying with a smile.

Open throughout war

Besukh has worked at the restaurant for several years. Now its main customers are soldiers stationed in Kramatorsk or those returning from the front.

The city, with a pre-war population of around 150,000, now lives under the constant threat of shelling. A strike on a hotel on July 7 had left one dead.

At Woka, the wooden protective panels had been installed and orders were piling up on the counter in front of a glass behind which Besukh was working.

He arranges, rolls and cuts up to a hundred pieces of sushi a day in the restaurant that has been open every day since Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24.

Open since 2016, the sushi bar today employs seven people, down from 28 employees before the war.

"It's normal to work, even in this situation," says Besukh, whose culinary career has taken him to the capital Kyiv, to the coast of the Sea of Azov and now back to his hometown Kramatorsk.

Asked whether he considered joining the army, he says with a smile, "Why should I? I have no experience, I would be of no use".

"Here I help in a certain way," adds the young man, who dreams of one day opening his own restaurant.

For now, the restaurant serves 10 to 30 dishes daily, all for takeaway or delivery. Customers are not allowed to eat inside for safety reasons.

"Imagine if a missile hit the restaurant, it's too big a responsibility for us," the restaurant's owner, Dmitry Pleskanov, said, just hours before a missile landed on Peace Square.

AFP



It was a loud noise. We didn't expect it, of course. I was scared. However, war is war, but lunch must be served on time

IGOR BESUKH



CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Logistics/Marketing

27 year old female Sri Lankan with an MSc and BSc in Logistics and Supply Chain and 4 plus years of experience seeking a job in Oman. Email ID: chamindrin@gmail.com Phone: +94-760200699

Shipping & Logistics Operations

27 year old male Sri Lankan with an

MSc in Logistics and Supply Chain and over 6 years of experience looking for a job in Oman. Email ID: meu.mithuranga@gmail.com Phone: +94-773492287

E-commerce Assistant Manager : Indian female with 6 years experience in ecommerce with skills in cataloging, order management, logistics, customer service seeks suitable placement.

Contact : 96629331

Looking for an investor for ceramics business which is located in Musannah. Contact-92942702

Pakistani man having experience 29 years in electrical supervisor, Oil and Gas and have a driving licences looking for a job. Please contact on:95196847

AUDIT, ACCOUNTING, VAT, TAXATION

Contact:97239696/95355638

Gulf Center Consultancy & Audit
Muscat, Sohar, Salalah, Sur
Kumar@gccaoman.com

FREE CLASSIFIED LISTING

Muscat Daily now offers free classified listings for individuals in the following categories: **Situations Wanted/ Accommodation Wanted or Available/ Sale of Household Items/ Car for Sale or Wanted/ Matrimonial Alliances (Word limit is 35)**
Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call 99104346

SITUATION VACANT

BAHWAN METAL & GLASS ENGINEERING LLC

Required Sales Representative with minimum 2 years of work experience in sales. The candidate should have 1 year working experience in Oman. Having a driving license and a car is a must.

Please send your CV to mazzan@bahwanmge.com
Tel: +96896666685

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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



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

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

INDONESIAN CUISINE

Sugar and spice

Indonesian cuisine – a blend of various regional influences – is significantly flavourful, fragrant, as well as visually appealing.

Try these highly popular dishes infused with 'sugar and spice and everything nice'

Nasi Goreng (Fried rice)

Ingredients

- 4tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 shallots - sliced
- 2tsp cornflour/cornstarch
- ¼tsp salt
- 1tsp shrimp paste
- 2 cloves garlic - minced
- 1 red chilli - minced
- 1tsp fish sauce
- 1tbsp brown sugar
- 1tsp tamarind paste
- 1tbsp tomato puree/paste
- 2tbsp dark soy sauce
- 800g cooked long grain rice - cooled
- 5 spring onions - chopped
- 5 eggs

Method

Heat 1tbsp of the oil in a large wok or frying pan until hot. Dust the shallot or onion slices in cornflour and add to the wok. Cook, for 5-6 minutes until browned and crispy, then remove from the pan and place in a bowl.

Turn the heat down to medium and add another 1tbsp of oil to the wok and add in

the shrimp paste, garlic and chilli. Heat for one minute until fragrant, then add in the fish sauce, brown sugar, tamarind, tomato puree, and soy sauce and heat for a minute.

Now add the rice to the wok and cook on a high heat. Use a spatula to ensure the rice doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan, and move the rice around so that it's all getting reheated.

Once the rice is hot (about 5 minutes), push the rice over to the side of the pan and crack one of the eggs into the space. Making sure this bit of the pan is over the heat, fry the egg, giving a mix with the spatula until the egg starts to cook and look scrambled.

Now mix the egg into the rice. Add the spring onions, a pinch of salt and the crispy onions and mix it all together. Reduce the heat to low.

Add the remaining oil to a large frying pan and heat until hot, then fry the remaining four eggs until the white is crisp at the edges, but the yolk is still runny. Divide the rice between four bowls and top each with a fried egg. Enjoy!



Rendang (Beef stew)

Ingredients

- 1 kg beef - cubed
- 3 cups coconut milk
- 3 stalks lemongrass
- 4 kaffir lime leaves

For curry paste

- 200g galangal – chopped
- 4 large cloves of garlic - minced
- 100g shallots - minced
- 100g red chillies - minced
- 2tbsp coriander seeds
- ¼tsp turmeric powder
- 2.5 cm piece ginger
- ½tsp salt
- 1tbsp coconut sugar

2tbsp coconut oil

Method

Blend all the curry paste ingredients together until smooth. In a wok, saute the curry paste with coconut oil until fragrant and then add the coconut milk. Bash the lemongrass stalks and add to the wok. Stir well and then add the beef. Cook over medium heat and bring the coconut milk to a boil before reducing the heat to a simmer. Cook on slow flame until the meat is tender and the colour turns dark brown (around 3 hours). Add a little water, after every 15-20 minutes, if the gravy dries up. When the meat is tender, Rendang is ready.

Satay Maranggi (Beef skewers)

Ingredients

- 600g beef, 100g palm sugar powder
- 3tbsp sweet soy sauce
- 20 fruit skewers - soaked in water

Ground spices

- 12 red chillies, 8 garlic cloves
- 1½tsp coriander powder
- 2tbsp concentrated tamarind water
- 1½tsp salt

Sambal

- 5 green chillies, 1tbsp vinegar
- 1 red tomato – chopped small
- 2 red onions - thinly sliced
- 2tbsp sweet soy sauce

Method

Cut the beef into cubes – 2cm size. Then mix with powdered palm sugar, sweet soy sauce and ground spices, stir well. Leave for 30 minutes for the spices to infuse.

Skewer 4-5 pieces of meat in each skewer. Finish until all ingredients are used up. Preheat the grill, and grill the satays, basting with the marinade frequently.

For the sambal, mix ground cayenne pepper, tomatoes and onions in a bowl, add vinegar and sweet soy sauce, stir well. Put the satays on a serving plate and serve while hot.

(The same recipe can be used for making chicken satay.)





Lusail, the final venue, worth the wait in gold

Egypt and Saudi champions to play in inaugural match at World Cup final stadium

Doha, Qatar - Qatar announced Monday that the club champions of Saudi Arabia and Egypt will inaugurate the Lusail stadium, to be used for the World Cup final, on September 9.

The Lusail Super Cup match, between Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal and the Egyptian champions, who are not yet decided, will be "the final milestone in our journey ahead of the big kick-off on November 21," said Hassan al Thawadi, secretary general of Qatar's organising committee.

The 80,000-capacity gold coloured venue, in the Lusail new city just north of Doha, was the last of the eight World Cup stadiums to be completed.

This incredible venue forms the centrepiece of our tournament and will be the focus of the world's attention when it hosts the FIFA World Cup final on Dec 18

HASSAN AL THAWADI

A test event is to be staged there on August 11 when a Qatar championship match between Al-Arabi SC and Al-Rayyan is held.

The stunning venue, which is located in the pioneering Lusail City, 15km north of central Doha, will host matches during every stage of Qatar 2022, starting

with the Group C clash between Argentina and Saudi Arabia on 22 November.

The stadium's design is inspired by the interplay of light and shadow that characterises the fanar lantern. Its shape and golden façade echo the intricate decorative motifs on bowls, vessels and other art pieces found

across the Arab and Islamic world during the rise of civilisation in the region.

"Showcasing Lusail Stadium is the final milestone in our journey ahead of the big kick-off on 21 November. This incredible venue forms the centrepiece of our tournament and will be the focus of the world's attention when it hosts the FIFA World Cup final on December 18, which is also Qatar National Day," said Al Thawadi.

"I am proud this venue will play a major role during the tournament and also deliver a lasting legacy for the people of Lusail and the wider community."

FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

CEO Nasser al Khater said: "Lusail Stadium will provide a magnificent stage for this year's FIFA World Cup final - the biggest and most prestigious football match on the planet. As far as preparations for the FIFA World Cup are concerned, this is the final piece of the jigsaw.

"Fans can expect a memorable and welcoming experience when they arrive in Qatar for the first FIFA World Cup in the Middle East and Arab world.

"Hosting this prestigious match at Lusail Stadium will give us a great opportunity to test the venue's readiness and the many operational plans we have put in place," he added.



Obed McCoy (L), of the West Indies, celebrates after dismissing India's Rohit Sharma in the second T20I match on Monday (AFP)

Record-breaking McCoy helps West Indies level series

Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Nevis - A record-breaking six-wicket haul by Obed McCoy paved the way for a nervy series-levelling five-wicket win for the West Indies over India in the second T20 International of the five-match series at Warner Park in St Kitts on Monday.

Comfortable winners of the opening encounter in Trinidad three days earlier, India were dismissed for 138 off 19.4 overs with left-arm seamer McCoy returning the outstanding figures of six for 17, the best-ever by a West Indian in T20 Internationals.

Opening batsman's Brandon King's 68 set the home side on their way to what looked a comfortable victory before they stumbled towards the end and needed an unbeaten 31 from wicketkeeper-batsman Devon Thomas to reach the target at 141 for five off 19.2 overs.

McCoy, who has endured a succession of injury setbacks in the previous 12 months, looked to be back to his best and gave the West Indies the perfect start when he claimed the vital wicket of Indian cap-

tain Rohit Sharma with the first ball of the match.

He also completed his four-over effort with a wicket - Bhuvneshwar Kumar - off his final ball and in between added the scalps of Suryakumar Yadav, Ravindra Jadeja, Dinesh Karthik and Ravi Ashwin as India's vaunted batting line-up laboured on pitch offering disconcerting bounce.

"I went into this match with a much clearer mind than the last game," said McCoy after receiving the 'Man of the Match' award.

Hardik Pandya topscored with 31 but no-one in the visitors' line-up was really able to get on top of a disciplined West Indies bowling effort.

King's polished innings at the start of the West Indies reply came off 52 balls with eight fours and two sixes.

When he was yorked by Avesh Khan in the 15th over though at 107 for four, India looked to tighten the screws, only for Khan to spoil his earlier good work when he bowled a no-ball at the start of the final over of the match and Thomas capitalised.

AFP

TCL

TCL QLED 4K TV

androidtv

Google Assistant

Vibrant Colors

Dolby Atmos Immersive Audio

GENETCO CARNIVAL

NOW BIGGER & BETTER!!

29th June to 27th August 2022

C725 | 65" | 55" | 50"

جینتکو Genetco

51

MUSCAT 97693496, 96742452

SALALAH 79011363

Available at Major Hypermarkets & Electronics Retailers

www.genetco.net

@GenetcoOman

Genetco Oman



Andy Murray returns a shot to Mikael Ymer at the Citi Open in Washington on Monday (AFP)

Murray, Venus defeated in Washington openers

Washington, United States - Three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray of Britain crashed out in the opening round of the ATP and WTA Washington Open on Monday, falling to Sweden's Mikael Ymer.

The 35-year-old Scotsman fell to 115th-ranked Ymer 7-6 (10/8), 4-6, 6-1 after two hours and 50 minutes at the US Open tuneup tournament.

World number 50 Murray, the 2012 and 2016 Olympic champion, is trying to earn a seeding at the US Open, which he won a decade ago.

Ymer, who lost his only career ATP final last August in Win-

ston-Salem, will next face 15th seed Aslan Karatsev.

Ymer won 75 percent of his first-serve points, 49-of-65, and smashed 37 winners past Murray, who made only 25 with 35 unforced errors, five more than Ymer.

Seven-time Grand Slam champion Venus Williams, playing her first singles match in nearly a year, was also eliminated in the opening round, falling to Canadian qualifier Rebecca Marino 4-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Williams had not played a WTA singles match since falling to Taiwan's Hsieh Su-wei 49 weeks ago in Chicago.

Two-time Grand Slam champion Simona Halep, coming off a Wimbledon semi-final run, beat Spanish qualifier Cristina Bucsa 6-3, 7-5.

US top seed Jessica Pegula cruised 6-2, 6-2, over US wildcard Hailey Baptiste.

Pegula won the most recent WTA Washington event in 2019 after two missed years due to Covid-19.

Britain's Kyle Edmund made a triumphant return to ATP singles after three left knee surgeries and a 20-month layoff by defeating Japanese qualifier Yosuke Watanuki 6-4, 7-6 (10/8).

AFP

England to play seven T20s on first Pakistan tour in 17 years

Karachi, Pakistan - England will play seven Twenty20 internationals against Pakistan on their first visit to the country in 17 years, the Pakistan Cricket Board said on Tuesday.

England will arrive in mid-September and play four T20s in Karachi, with the other three matches in Lahore, and then return in December for three Tests.

England's last tour to the country was in 2005 before Pakistan were forced to play international matches at neutral venues in the UAE following a 2009 attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore.

India-Pakistan clash at Asia Cup

Arch-rivals India and Pakistan will clash at the Asia Cup cricket in Dubai on August 28, organisers said on Tuesday as they released the match schedule. Political tensions mean cricketers from the two countries currently only meet in multi-nation events.

They will face off in the Group A opener of the Twenty20 tournament, which was moved out of crisis-hit Sri Lanka to the UAE.

Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Afghanistan are also confirmed for the main draw. The tournament begins on August 27 with Sri Lanka taking on Afghanistan.

AFP

Jota signs new ‘long-term deal’ with Liverpool

London, United Kingdom - Diogo Jota has signed a “new long-term deal” with Liverpool, the Premier League giants announced Tuesday.

Neither the exact length of the contract, nor its worth, were not disclosed British media reported the Portuguese forward, who joined Liverpool from English rivals Wolves in 2020 would be staying at Anfield until at least 2027. The 25-year-old has become an important figure at Liverpool, scoring 34 goals in 85 appearances,

He was a central figure as Liverpool were narrowly denied a historic quadruple last season as they were pipped to the Premier League title by a point by Manchester City and lost the Champions League final 1-0 to Real

Madrid after winning the League and FA Cup.

Jota is sidelined with a hamstring injury and will miss Liverpool’s opening match of the new Premier League season, against Fulham on Saturday.

“Really proud, I have to say,” Jota told Liverpool’s website.

“Obviously since I arrived two years ago I established myself as an important player in this team. That’s what I wanted from the beginning.

“Now, signing a new long-term deal, it’s obviously from the club’s perspective proof of the belief in myself as a player. For me, it’s really good to establish I’ll be here for a while.

“So, the beginning of a new season, let’s do it.”

AFP



Diogo Jota would be staying at Anfield until at least 2027



Mohamed Salah (L) will be crucial to Liverpool’s chances of stopping reigning champions Manchester City (AFP)

Manchester City, Liverpool renew title fight as Premier League clubs flex financial muscle

Manchester, United Kingdom - Premier League clubs have splashed an estimated £1 billion (\$1.2 billion) in the arms race for new talent ahead of the start to the 2022/23 season on Friday, but champions Manchester City remain the side to beat.

After winning four league titles in five years, Pep Guardiola’s squad has been bolstered by the biggest name arrival of the summer in Erling Haaland.

The Norwegian had his choice of Europe’s top clubs after scoring 85 goals in 88 games for Borussia Dortmund and followed in the footsteps of his father Alf Inge - a former City captain - to the blue side of Manchester.

Haaland may have had a debut to forget as he missed a glaring opportunity towards the end of City’s 3-1 Community Shield defeat to Liverpool on Saturday, but Guardiola warned the

pretenders to his side’s throne that “the goals will come”.

In a window of significant change at the Etihad, Argentine forward Julian Alvarez and England international midfielder Kalvin Phillips have also arrived.

But Guardiola has let plenty of experience go to Premier League rivals with Gabriel Jesus and Oleksandr Zinchenko heading to Arsenal and Raheem Sterling joining Chelsea.

Liverpool are best placed to pounce on any slipping of City’s standards. Jurgen Klopp’s side were denied a historic quadruple by the finest of margins last season as they were pipped to the title by a point and lost the Cham-

pions League final 1-0 to Real Madrid after winning the League and FA Cup.

The Reds have also refreshed their front line with the imposing presence of Darwin Nunez coming in to compensate for the loss of Sadio Mane to Bayern Munich.

Nunez did make an immediate impact in the Community Shield, winning a penalty and scoring to turn the game in Liverpool’s favour late in the game.

City and Liverpool have dominated English football for the past five years, but if there is to be a challenge from the chasing pack, it could come from Tottenham.

Ahead of Antonio Conte’s first full season in charge, the Italian

has been heavily backed by the normally thrifty Spurs board with the signings of Richarlison, Yves Bissouma, Ivan Perisic, Djed Spence, Clement Lenglet and Fraser Forster. Crucially, Tottenham have also retained the star duo of Harry Kane and Son Heung-min as they aim for a first league title in 62 years.

Arsenal have been in blistering pre-season form with Jesus on fire against Chelsea and Sevilla.

Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel blasted his side as “not competitive” after losing 4-0 to the Gunners in Orlando and the Blues are a team in transition following Todd Boehly’s takeover.

AFP

South American countries set to launch official 2030 WWC bid

Montevideo, Uruguay - Four South American countries will on Tuesday launch an unprecedented joint bid to host the 2030 World Cup with the hope of bringing the global showpiece back to its first home.

Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay and Chile’s intention to bid has long been in the making.

More than three years ago they committed to create a local organizing committee to co-ordinate with South American football’s governing body CONMEBOL to plan their bid.

But it has taken until now for the “Juntos 2030” (Together 2030) bid to be made official.

It centers on the desire to “bring the World Cup back to its original home: South America,” said CONMEBOL president Alejandro Dominguez.

The very first edition of the World Cup in 1930 was held in Uruguay and won by the hosts, beating their neighbors Argentina 4-2 in the final.

The joint South American bid



aims to stage the 2030 final in the very same Centenario stadium that hosted the first title match 100 years earlier.

“For us it should be called the 2030 Centenary World Cup,” said Uruguay’s sports minister Sebastian Bauza.

“What we have to focus on is the Centenary World Cup. The 100 year celebration of the first World Cup will be here. Back to the legend, back to its roots!”

Should it be successful, though, the two tournaments could not be more different. In

1930 there were only 13 teams and the entire tournament was played in the same city - Montevideo - in just three stadiums.

In 2030 there will be 48 teams with around 15 stadiums used across the four countries.

The 2026 tournament has already been awarded to three countries - Canada, Mexico and the United States.

The joint South American bid will likely come up against at least two other proposals.

Spain and Portugal have officially submitted a joint bid while Morocco have repeatedly insisted they will bid to become only the second ever African country to host the finals.

The United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland decided in February to abandon a joint bid that would have seen five FIFA member federations hosting the tournament. There has also been tentative talk of an Israeli bid alongside the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

AFP



Dalma Cortadi

Argentine referee seeks ‘justice’ after attack

Buenos Aires, Argentina - Argentine football referee Dalma Cortadi appealed Monday for justice to be done after she was punched from behind by a male player who disagreed with her on-field ruling during a regional league match.

Cortadi, 30, laid criminal charges against her attacker, 34-year-old Cristian Tirone, who was arrested on the pitch after knocking down the referee after she yellow-carded him for a foul.

Cortadi was taken to hospital and spent several hours under observation after the attack, which was caught on video.

The footage shows Tirone seemingly aiming his fist at the back of Cortadi’s head, missing, and connecting with her neck.

“I fell and I don’t remember anything else. When I got up I was dizzy and nauseous. Nothing like this has ever happened to me,” she told the Ole sports daily.

Cortadi was refereeing a third-tier match of the Tres Arroyos regional league between Independencia and Garmense, which was suspended after the attack.

She told Ole her gender was irrelevant to the matter.

AFP

Free home delivery & timely service

oman OASIS
BALANCED DRINKING WATER

Oasis Water Co. SAOC,
PO Box 57, Ruqayyah 124,
Sultanate of Oman.
www.omanoasis.com

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

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

C.R. No: 1265452

mai alkaline

Alkaline Ionized Drinking Water

HYDRATE SMARTLY

- ✓ Ultra-hydrating
- ✓ Revitalizing
- ✓ Energizing

pH 9.1 to 9.5

Toll-free
800 71 222 or
☎ 9275 5522

C.R. No.: 1365452



Emma McKeon (R) celebrates women's 50m butterfly gold with bronze medallist Holly Barratt (AFP)

McKeon and on and on...

Birmingham, United Kingdom - Australian swim sensation Emma McKeon won a record-extending 12th gold medal at the Commonwealth Games on Monday as cycling star Laura Kenny finished her campaign with an emotional gold.

It was another night of domination in the Birmingham pool for Australia, who now have 16 golds at the Sandwell Aquatics Centre out of a possible 33.

McKeon, who powered home in the 50m butterfly, has now won four golds in Birmingham and has collected more overall gold medals than any

other athlete in Commonwealth Games history.

The 28-year-old, who won seven medals at last year's Tokyo Olympics - including four golds - touched in 25.90sec.

"I love a challenge," said McKeon. "Just having this huge workload is preparing me for Paris (2024 Olympics) and even though it's hard workload physically, it's just training my mind to be able to do that many races back to back.

"I'm not going to have that many once I get to Paris. It's just building that self-belief."

Rising Canadian star Summer McIntosh, who is just

15, won her second gold of the Games, adding the women's 200m individual medley title to her 400m IM crown.

Australia's Kyle Chalmers won the men's 100m freestyle final in 47.51sec after a 48-hour period that he described as "hell" as a result of intense speculation in the media over his relationships with team members.

Reports suggested a rift with McKeon and Cody Simpson, who is reportedly dating McKeon, Chalmers's ex-girlfriend.

The 2016 Olympic champion said: "The lies and false truths

getting put out there - it's nowhere near the truth at all."

Australian Olympic champion Kaylee McKeown destroyed the field to win the women's 200m backstroke and Australia rounded off the night in style by winning the men's 4x200m freestyle relay.

England's Kenny and Australian Matthew Glaetzer won gold medals in track cycling. New Zealand's Ellesse Andrews, in the women's keirin, and compatriot Aaron Gate, in the men's 40km points race, both won their third gold medals of the games.

AFP



Chairman's Report – June 2022

Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Vision Insurance SAOG, I present the financial performance of your Company for the Half-yearly period ended 30th June 2022. Compounding the damages from the covid-19 pandemic, the ongoing conflict in Europe has magnified the slowdown in the global economy, which could become a protracted period of feeble growth and elevated inflation. Global growth is expected to slump from 5.7 percent in 2021 to 2.9 percent in 2022, which is significantly lower than 4.1% anticipated in January, according to the World bank's latest global economic progress report. The global stock market fell sharply from May 2022 as the flurry of interest rate hikes across the globe fueled recession fears.

Economic growth in the MENA region is forecasted to accelerate to 5.3% in 2022 before slowing to 3.6 as per the World Bank report. The current growth in the GCC region is mainly driven by strong growth in rising oil revenues.

S&P has raised the sovereign credit rating of Oman to "B+" as stable and positive from "BB-", the first rating upgrade in over a decade. In April 2022, IMF projected Oman's economy to grow by 5.6% in 2022. Higher oil prices and production, about 90 percent double-dose vaccination rates for those 18 years and above, removal of pandemic-related measures, and public investment spending will drive stronger growth in 2022.

Motor business is heading on the right track as per the action points taken in the "Reverse the Trend" plan. While the insurance market has indicated -1% negative growth in H1 driven by a drop in new cars sales and the continuous drop in motor insurance prices, Vision was able to grow our Motor Comprehensive line by more than 10%. Growth will be more visible at the Motor portfolio level through successful partnerships and the ongoing Call Centre setup together of course with the geographical presence in more than 18 branches all around Sultanate of Oman. Non-motor premiums jumped up by 32% when compared with the same period in 2021.

Your Company reported strong growth of total gross written premium up to 30th June 2022 to RO 9.73 million, registering 21% growth over the corresponding period of 2021. Profit after tax for the half-yearly period ended at RO 228 K, growing by 430% from RO 43K in the corresponding period of 2021.

Higher realized investment income during the period got neutralized by Valuation losses in the 2nd quarter of 2022 due to global equity market meltdown, which resulted in subdued comprehensive investment income of RO 508K up to half yearly period ended 30th June 2022 against RO 1,128K in Q2-2021.

Key Financial Highlights:

Key Financial Highlights are as presented below:

- Gross written premium of RO 9.73 million, 21% higher than RO 8.02 in Q2-2021. Non-motor premium showed commendable growth of 32% over Q2-2021, motor premium however contracted by 2% due to higher tariff maintained by Company.
- Profit after tax at RO 228K, 430% higher than RO 43K in Q2-2021.
- Company able to contain the management expenses to RO 1.54 million, signifying a 7% reduction over expenses of RO 1.66 million in Q2-2021.
- Due to negative equity market performance in the 2nd Quarter of 2022, Company registered a total comprehensive loss of RO (184K) against a comprehensive income of RO 513K in Q2-2021. Overall S&P GCC composite index has given up its entire gain in the 2nd quarter of 2022 and now the S&P GCC index is down by (-0.08%) over December 2021.
- Net Written Premium at RO 2.87 million against RO 2.53 million of 2021, improved by 13% over Q2-2021.
- Underwriting Results decreased to RO 0.78 million from RO 1 million in 2021, mainly due to higher motor claims reported during the period.
- Realized Investment Income was RO 0.92 million, higher by 40% % over RO 0.658 million in 2021 due to the realization of profit from the sale of equities in the 2nd quarter of 2022.

Outlook for 2022:

Upon the change in management back in June 2021, the exercise of a new horizon has been progressing by fixing the basics in 2021 to move into sustainable profitable growth moving forward. Q1 and now Q2 have indicated the company's priorities by not only growing the business and reporting the highest profit growth ratio in H1, but also embedding the culture of Omantization, engagement, and high performance as key strategies to achieve our targets. The Talent Retention & Career Development program has been kicked off by identifying more than 34 talents to once again confirm that our employees are our greatest investment, they nurture the overall performance of our company. The journey of talent recognition started to continue with regular progress and improvement.

Motor business is back on track by building a healthy ground for growth and profitability through establishing all needed reporting capabilities to measure our business performance on daily basis; also by improving the claim management and customer experience, in addition of course to the ongoing efforts of boosting sales by linking our marketing activities with the successful partnerships as well as the unique traditional distribution channels like the branches, call center, and the online solutions. Our Medical Line of business has shown an exceptional growth of more than 130% by winning the trust of some large new clients and being loyal to our existing business.

With the strengthening credit rating of Oman to "B+" by S&P and narrowing budget deficit thanks to strong energy prices, Oman's economy is expected to gain further momentum in 2022 and expected to grow by 5.6% in 2022 as per the latest report of IMF. Overall premium in the insurance sector is likely to show growth in 2022 and up to half year period ended 30th June 2022, the market premium is up by 10% as per the CMA portal, mainly driven by growth in property, liability, marine, medical and group life premium. The Company is prepared more than any time before to move into a new level of business development, risk management, and superior customer experience by being available and committed to the promise we made to our customers of being there, next to them at the time they need our support and involvement.

Acknowledgement:

On behalf of all Board Members, the Management, and Employees of the Company, I express our profound sense of respect, admiration, and gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq for his inspiring and visionary leadership for continued stability, growth, and prosperity for Oman and the people of Oman. We remain thankful to Capital Market Authority and other regulatory authorities for their support. We greatly value the confidence and support extended to the Company by all our clients, business partners, shareholders, and our employees. We sincerely thank them all.

We join the people of our beloved country in wishing our revered leader His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq many more years ahead of good Health, Peace, and Prosperity.

Dr. Abdullah Masoud Al Harthy
Chairman
27th July 2022

INTERIM CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION as at 30 June 2022

	30-June- 2022 RO	30-June- 2021 RO	2021 (Full Year Audited) RO
ASSETS			
Cash and bank balances	458,420	1,874,893	2,108,880
Deposits	12,806,740	13,805,835	12,806,740
Insurance and other receivables	9,325,143	6,729,007	8,904,759
Reinsurance assets	19,771,372	25,136,232	20,634,993
Available-for-sale investments	7,778,969	7,434,439	7,949,218
Property, furniture and equipment	189,799	287,378	243,837
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>50,330,443</u>	<u>55,267,784</u>	<u>52,648,427</u>
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES			
Equity			
Share capital	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000
Capital reserve	87,182	87,182	87,182
Fair value reserve	301,044	527,500	713,318
Legal reserve	1,185,149	1,185,149	1,185,149
Contingency reserve	2,932,375	2,916,685	2,932,376
Retained earnings	<u>(1,386,183)</u>	<u>238,574</u>	<u>(1,614,019)</u>
Total equity	<u>13,119,567</u>	<u>14,955,090</u>	<u>13,304,006</u>
Liabilities			
Insurance contract liabilities	28,404,251	30,919,114	28,253,492
Employees' end of service benefits	90,683	213,948	82,248
Trade and other liabilities	8,715,942	9,179,632	11,008,681
Total liabilities	<u>37,210,876</u>	<u>40,312,694</u>	<u>39,344,421</u>
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	<u>50,330,443</u>	<u>55,267,784</u>	<u>52,648,427</u>
Net assets per share (RO)	<u>0.131</u>	<u>0.150</u>	<u>0.133</u>

INTERIM CONDENSED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME For the period ended 30 June 2022

	Unaudited 6 months Ended 30 June 2022	Unaudited 6 months Ended 30 June 2021	Unaudited 3 months Ended 30 June 2022	Unaudited 3 months Ended 30 June 2021
Income:				
Gross insurance premiums written	9,732,000	8,023,163	5,102,836	3,423,969
Reinsurer's share of gross insurance premiums written	<u>(6,854,861)</u>	<u>(5,492,013)</u>	<u>(3,709,548)</u>	<u>(2,412,276)</u>
Net insurance premium written	<u>2,877,139</u>	<u>2,531,150</u>	<u>1,393,288</u>	<u>1,011,693</u>
Change in unearned premium reserve ("UPR"):				
Gross change in UPR	1,030,826	2,159,958	89,061	3,091,875
Reinsurer's share of UPR	<u>(1,267,747)</u>	<u>(2,195,263)</u>	<u>(131,663)</u>	<u>(2,895,151)</u>
Net change in UPR	<u>(236,921)</u>	<u>(35,305)</u>	<u>(42,602)</u>	<u>196,724</u>
Net insurance premium revenue earned	<u>2,640,218</u>	<u>2,495,845</u>	<u>1,350,686</u>	<u>1,208,417</u>
Investment income, net	920,425	657,673	528,248	296,486
Other operating income	99,415	107,784	22,679	24,086
Other Income	<u>56,095</u>	<u>45,272</u>	<u>37,132</u>	<u>29,706</u>
	<u>3,716,153</u>	<u>3,306,574</u>	<u>1,938,745</u>	<u>1,558,695</u>
Expenses:				
Gross claims and loss adjustment expenses paid	5,131,072	4,571,960	2,548,710	1,852,145
Reinsurer's share of the gross claims and loss adjustment expenses paid	<u>(3,196,374)</u>	<u>(2,431,563)</u>	<u>(1,386,181)</u>	<u>(808,603)</u>
Gross change in insurance liabilities	<u>1,181,585</u>	<u>(1,732,670)</u>	<u>(1,310,987)</u>	<u>(998,768)</u>
Reinsurer's share of the gross change in insurance liabilities	<u>(404,126)</u>	<u>1,756,600</u>	<u>1,559,836</u>	<u>931,823</u>
Expenses on acquisition of insurance contracts (net)	<u>(760,214)</u>	<u>(564,707)</u>	<u>(385,301)</u>	<u>(297,714)</u>
General and administration expenses	<u>1,536,374</u>	<u>1,659,234</u>	<u>762,136</u>	<u>851,315</u>
	<u>3,488,317</u>	<u>3,258,854</u>	<u>1,788,213</u>	<u>1,530,198</u>
Profit for the year before taxation	<u>227,836</u>	<u>47,720</u>	<u>150,532</u>	<u>28,497</u>
*Income tax		<u>(4,709)</u>		<u>(4,709)</u>
Profit for the year after tax	<u>227,836</u>	<u>43,011</u>	<u>150,532</u>	<u>23,788</u>
Other comprehensive income that will be reclassified to the profit or loss				
Net change in fair value of available-for-sale investments	<u>(412,274)</u>	<u>469,755</u>	<u>(707,998)</u>	<u>290,784</u>
Other comprehensive loss for the period, net of tax	<u>(412,274)</u>	<u>469,755</u>	<u>(707,998)</u>	<u>290,784</u>
Total comprehensive (Loss) / income for the period	<u>(184,438)</u>	<u>512,766</u>	<u>(557,466)</u>	<u>314,572</u>
Basic and diluted Loss/ earnings per share**	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income per share	<u>(0.001)</u>	<u>0.005</u>	<u>(0.006)</u>	<u>0.003</u>



Tiger Woods

Tiger Woods rejected \$700-800 mn LIV offer, says Greg Norman

New York, United States - Tiger Woods turned down an offer of about \$700-800 million to take part in the Saudi-funded LIV Golf series, the rebel circuit's chief Greg Norman said.

Fifteen-time major champion Woods has always made clear his opposition to the series which is threatening to tear golf apart and triggered accusations of Saudi "sportswashing".

Speaking in an interview on Fox News with Tucker Carlson, LIV chief executive Norman was asked if it was true that the American golf legend was offered "700, 800, a billion dollars" to join the breakaway circuit.

"That number was out there before I became CEO so that number's been out there, yes," Norman, a former world number one who is the public face of LIV Golf, said in the interview at Trump National in Bedminster, New Jersey, where the third LIV Golf Invitational was held last weekend.

"And look, Tiger is a needle-mover, right? So of course, you are going to look at the best of the best. They had originally approached Tiger before I became CEO, so yes, that number is somewhere in that neighbourhood."

The 46-year-old Woods has consistently declared his loyalty to the PGA Tour and said he has no intention of following the likes of other major winners, such as Phil Mickelson, Bryson DeChambeau, Sergio Garcia and Dustin Johnson in jumping ship to the upstart LIV.

"I disagree with it," Woods said ahead of the British Open in St Andrews last month when asked about his fellow professionals who have been tempted to join the hugely lucrative but deeply controversial circuit.

"I think that what they've done is they've turned their back on what has allowed them to get to this position," Woods said.

AFP

Portugal to host 2023 MotoGP season opener

Paris, France - The 2023 MotoGP season will open in Portugal rather than its usual starting point in Qatar, the International Motorcycling Federation (FIM) announced on Tuesday.

Since 2007, the season has started with a night race in Qatar but the Losail circuit, which also hosts a Formula One Grand Prix, is scheduled for renovation.

It is expected to host its MotoGP race later in the season. The Portuguese Grand Prix

will be held at Portimao in the Algarve on March 26.

The track will also host a winter test session in the week before the Grand Prix.

The track has hosted MotoGP since 2020 and the last two races have been won by reigning world champion Fabio Quartararo of France.

The final schedule for the entire 2023 MotoGP season will be announced "in due course," FIM said.

AFP