



THURSDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2021

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HOCKEY STALWART NAQVI PASSES AWAY  
GO TO PAGE 15 SPORTS

## Royal Decree grants first class licence to OTF

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued Royal Decree No 65/2021 on Wednesday, granting Oman Future Telecommunications Company (OFT) a first class licence to provide and operate a system of international general telecommunications service.

**Article 1** grants OFT a first class licence to provide and operate a system of international general telecommunications service, in accordance with the provisions of the licence attached to this decree.

**Article 2** states that this decree will be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

ONA

## Sultan Haitham Award for Governance announced

Muscat - The Command of the Sultan's Armed Forces (COSAF) organised a national symposium on governance and its role in improving performance, enhancing transparency and improving financial and administrative auditing, under the auspices of H H Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, on Wednesday.

Among a host of recommendations, the symposium initiated the introduction of a governance award named 'Sultan Haitham Award for Governance'.

The symposium aimed to introduce governance and its importance as a development tool which supports all sectors in the sultanate. It also reviewed the regional and international best practices in governance, mechanisms of implementing these in the administrative ap-



paratus, as well as theories and studies of utilising governance in developing the performance of military and security departments.

The event saw the participation of officials from the Ministry of Defence, Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF), Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labour, Min-

istry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Capital Market Authority, State Audit Institution (SAI), Oman Centre for Governance and Sustainability (OCGS), Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, Oman Investment Authority, Sultan Qaboos University and Injaz Develop-

ment.

Three sessions of the symposium included several presentations and working papers covering various topics related to governance, namely governance as a development tool, governance in Oman's legislation and Oman Vision 2040, among other papers.

The symposium came up with a number of recommendations, including activating and speeding up implementation of Oman Vision 2040 enablers, and improving financial and administrative auditing.

The symposium also recommended granting OCGS the power to apply governance in the public sector, and proposed publishing an annual summary of the major works of SAI, among other recommendations.

The symposium was attended by members of the royal family, several ministers, chairmen of State Council and Majlis A'Shura, SAF Chief of Staff, commanders of other military and security departments, a number of under-secretaries, senior SAF officers, academics and other military and civil guests.

ONA

## Relief for consumers as Oman caps fuel prices

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

Petrol and diesel prices will not increase beyond the current rate until the end of 2022, even if global crude oil prices continue to rise in the next 14 months.

On Tuesday, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued directives to cap vehicle fuel prices at the October rates until the end of 2022, providing relief to consumers following a spike to a record high this month.

The Royal directive was welcomed by citizens and residents alike. Mohammed al Balushi, a government employee, said, "As an office-goer in Muscat who travels every weekend to my home town Sohar, fuel expense is among my weekly priorities. This decision is definitely good news for me. I will not have to worry about monthly fuel price hikes."

Following rising oil prices globally this year, retail prices of petrol and diesel have been increasing almost every month



*The decision to stabilise fuel prices gives us surety that it will not increase further, no matter how high global oil prices rise till the end of next year*

HAMAD SULTAN AL MUSALLAMI

since the beginning of 2021.

Fuel prices were deregulated

in Oman in January 2016 and

since then, petrol and diesel

prices for every month have been set based on crude prices in the international market.

As per the Royal directives, the government will bear differences from any excess resulting from higher oil prices till the end of 2022.

With global oil prices continuing to climb, consumers in the sultanate were expecting further increases in fuel prices in the coming months, but the decision to cap prices at the October level has come as relief to motorists.

"The decision to stabilise fuel prices gives us surety that it will not increase further, no matter how high global oil prices rise till the end of next year," said Hamad Sultan al Musallami, who works in the oil and gas sector.

Fuel prices in Oman hit record highs earlier this month, with a litre of M91 petrol costing 233bz, M95 petrol costing 242bz, and diesel costing 275bz. Prices will be revised to the October level - 229bz for M91, 239bz for M95 and 258bz for diesel.

## Flurry of diplomatic activity to bring peace in Yemen

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

A flurry of diplomatic activity is taking place to bring an end to the long-drawn war in Yemen.

Oman, which has been at the forefront in bringing warring parties together for a dialogue, continues to conduct back-channel diplomacy for a timely resolution of the conflict in Yemen. On Tuesday evening, H E Sayyid Badr Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, received a phone call from Antony Blinken, US Secretary of State, to discuss ways of boosting efforts to stop the war and encourage dialogue among all parties involved to achieve security and stability in Yemen.

"Spoke this evening with my US colleague Secretary Blinken. We discussed our mutual desire for and commitment to achieving peace in Yemen besides other issues of common concern," H E Sayyid Badr tweeted.

In other developments, Hans Grundberg, UN Special Envoy for Yemen, visited the besieged city of Ta'ez in southern Yemen on Monday for the first time. US Special Envoy Tom Lenderking, also made his first visit to Yemen with a stop in Aden, the govern-



*Military operations are causing significant casualties, which are exacerbating the humanitarian situation and undermining peace efforts*

HANS GRUNDBERG

ment's stronghold.

On the day, the Saudi-led coalition reported 115 more Houthi rebels were killed in its air strikes around Marib, the key northern city.

Yemen is facing an "uphill bat-

tle" for peace, Grundberg said in Ta'ez. "Military operations are causing significant casualties, which are exacerbating the humanitarian situation and undermining peace efforts," he added, while holding out hope of a breakthrough.

"We should never forget that there is always a way to break the cycle of violence. There are always opportunities for peaceful dialogue."

Lenderking, who met Prime Minister Ma'een Abdulmalek Sa'eed, called for better coordination with southern separatists who have also periodically clashed in recent years with the Saudi-backed government.

Lenderking stressed "that now is the time for all Yemenis to come together to end this war and enact bold reforms to revive the economy, counter corruption and alleviate suffering".

Lenderking travelled to Aden with Cathy Westley, top diplomat at the US embassy for Yemen based in Riyadh.

The Saudi-led coalition has since October 11 issued near-daily reports of bombing around Marib, saying it has since killed more than 2,500 insurgents.

With inputs from AFP



## Unicef calls to reduce digital poverty among MENA school children

Amman, Jordan - Schools across the Middle East and North Africa region were closed due to COVID-19 for four to six weeks longer than the global average, affecting the learning and wellbeing of millions of children in every age group, according to Unicef.

Ted Chaiban, regional director for the Middle East and North Africa, Unicef, said although schools have reopened in 18 countries in MENA, it is not enough.

"It is not enough to simply reopen classroom doors. It is high time to prioritise back to learning across the region, not only through budgets and financing, but also through a focus on life skills and the reduction of digital poverty, including through expanding Internet bandwidth and making digital devices and equipment more available and affordable to bridge the digital gap," said Chaiban.

Most reopened schools in the region are applying a blended approach combining in-person and

remote teaching and learning for children and teachers.

"The reopening of schools is so critical, not only for children's education but also for their wellbeing. The impact of school closures on children's mental health has been huge," added Chaiban.

While all countries across the region made at least one online platform available to enable home-based learning during school closures, at least 39mn children (or nearly 40 per cent) have not had access to remote learning. This was primarily due to digital poverty - the lack of or the sporadic access to Internet and/or not having enough digital devices in households. In some countries, including Libya, Sudan, Syria and Yemen, access to the Internet is lower than 35 per cent.

Governments across the region spend only 14 per cent of their budgets on education, below the world average, and the international target, Unicef stated in press release.

### OMAN-BRITAIN MUSANDAM FORT 2021 EXERCISE CONTINUES



The Oman-Britain military exercise, codenamed 'Musandam Fort 2021', continues in Musandam governorate. The exercise, which runs till Thursday, is in line with Royal Army of Oman Command's training programme and within the framework of exchanging expertise and military skills to achieve the desired training objectives ONA



## Via ferrata in Jebel Shams now safe after maintenance work

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism has carried out maintenance work on a via ferrata route in Jebel Shams.

An Italian term that translates to 'iron path', via ferrata allows adventure seekers and climbers to climb steep rock faces in relative safety with the support of fixed and dedicated wire cables, metal rings and ladders.

The via ferrata in Jebel Shams,

which was in need of maintenance, stretches to a height of 80m. The maintenance work was carried out by the Hiking Oman team, replacing old metal rings with new ones.

Abdullah bin Suleiman al Shukaili, head of Hiking Oman, informed that the maintenance work was taken up following a number of accidents resulting from sharp edged pegs, which have been replaced with 'U' pegs.

"The 'U' pegs are considered safe for adventurers. Maintenance work included drilling and installing new pegs in a safe and professional manner."

The maintenance work was done under the technical supervision of Royal Army of Oman.

Via ferratas were originally developed in the Italian Alps during World War I to assist troop movement in difficult mountainous terrain. In the modern world, via ferrata routes that combine trekking and climbing activities are popular in adventure sports.

With input from ONA

# Celebrations for Day of Tolerance on Nov 16, 17

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

To commemorate International Day of Tolerance on November 16 and to emphasise Oman's message of harmony and peaceful co-existence, the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs, in collaboration with the Helsinki-based Network for Religious and Traditional Peacemakers, will organise two events on November 16 and 17, 2021.

This year's International Day of Tolerance comes at a time of crisis for humanity. To date, the COVID-19 pandemic has claimed over 5mn lives, devastated the global economy, and upended several aspects of human life. The pandemic has further exacerbated poverty and inequality, including the impact on women, girls and marginalised communities and groups, according to a statement made by the ministry at a press conference on

*'No vaccine can undo the damage already done. The damage will extend into years and decades to come'*

Wednesday.

'These groups have been disproportionately more impacted, losing their livelihoods faster and facing greater health risks because of the existing political, social and economic inequalities.'

According to the UN Secretary-General, the social and economic impact of the pandemic is enormous and growing. 'No vaccine can undo the damage already done. The damage will extend into years and decades to come.'

The impacts have further deepened mistrust and divisions within communities and multi-lateral institutions, the ministry said.

On November 16, the 'Importance of Promoting Values of Tol-

erance in Communities in Times of Crisis' will be highlighted with special focus on the global crisis caused by the pandemic. On this day, religious and other institutional entities will highlight the role of supporting and protecting the principles of tolerance and human rights during crisis.

There will also be a roundtable on the 'Role of Science and Scholars in Promoting Values of Tolerance in Times of Crisis' with religious leaders, faith-based institutions and community leaders exchanging views, experiences and measures they have taken to effectively promote tolerance in times of crisis and reflect on their contributions to the United Nations 2030 Agenda.

The UN mentions five factors in the fight against intolerance: law, education, access to information, individual awareness, and local solutions.

On November 17, 'Importance and Role of Societies and Organisations in Mitigating COVID-19 Consequences' will be highlighted, with special focus on efforts of individuals, organisations and institutions in various societies. The day will host local and global representatives from various sectors.

There will also be an interactive presentation, titled 'Whole of Society Approach: Shining Examples of Mitigating COVID-19 Consequences', that will bring together entities from the UN and its member states, civil society and multi-religious organisations to share the best practices and mechanisms they have adopted in their local context to promote peace and inclusion amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

## MoH workshop reviews response to COVID-19

Muscat - The Intra-action Review (IAR) for COVID-19 response workshop began under the patronage of H E Dr Ahmed Mohammed al Sa'eedi, Minister of Health, on Wednesday in Muscat.

The two-day workshop is being organised by the Ministry of Health's (MoH) Directorate General of Disease Surveillance and Control in cooperation with the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean as well as the WHO office in Oman.

It comes in preparation for the visit of a regional office team to conduct IAR in due course.

In his statement at the opening, H E Dr Sa'eedi highlighted the country's efforts exerted in COVID-19 response and exchange of expertise, and praised the remarkable role of health personnel during the pandemic.

He stated that COVID-19 has imposed many challenges on health systems, governments, as



well as communities, noting that the workshop will highlight all actions taken to confront the pandemic.

On his turn, Dr Jean Jabbour, WHO representative in Oman, said that MoH and WHO continue to work to strengthen the joint efforts and share expertise and experiences.

Dr Saif al Abri, Director General of Disease Surveillance and Control, presented the epidemi-

ological situation of COVID-19, the response plan as well as the recovery plan and phases of immunisation.

The workshop aims at building national capacities on conducting IAR, and offering the opportunity to exchange experiences and collectively analyse the actions taken so far to respond to the ongoing pandemic in a bid to identify best practices, challenges, and lessons learnt.

## Exemption of fines for hotels till Dec 31

Muscat - The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has issued a clarification regarding exemptions of fines for hotels and tourist establishments, stating they need to urgently correct their situation before December 31.

In a statement, MHT said, 'Based on the decision of the Supreme Committee to deal with COVID-19 that was issued on September 22, 2021, the ministry invites beneficiaries of its services to take advantage of the period of exemptions for fines and to urgently correct their situation before December 31, 2021.'

It also clarified that exemption from fines is for all licences issued by the ministry that expired or will expire between June 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021, provided that they are renewed.

Also, rental fees for owners of SMEs which are located within real estate owned by government bodies are exempted.



## Oman Air resumes Munich, Zurich, Kuala Lumpur flights

Muscat - Oman Air, the national carrier, has updated its winter schedule reflecting frequency increases and flight resumption. Among reinstated destinations are Munich, Zurich and Kuala Lumpur.

Munich and Zurich flights will start from December 1, 2021. The Munich flights will be on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday, and the Zurich flights will be on Wednesday and Friday.

The four-flights a week schedule for Kuala Lumpur will start from December 4, 2021.

Oman Air will maintain its comprehensive safety programme throughout all elements of the journey to ensure that guests fly confidently. Masks are required when guests are on board the aircraft and in Oman's airports.

'Distancing is maintained while guests board and exit the aircraft, which are carefully cleaned after each flight and at the end of every day. Meal service has been modified to further ensure safety, and a number of other measures have been implemented to ensure that the air-

line's guests and crew are safe at all times,' stated a press release.

Guests who are planning to travel to Muscat should visit the Civil Aviation Authority website - caa.gov.om - to ensure they are prepared to comply with requirements to enter the sultanate, the airline added.

'Guests travelling to Germany, Switzerland and Malaysia, as well as all other destinations on Oman Air's network, should ensure they are aware of official requirements to enter or transit through their destination.'



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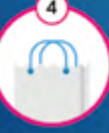
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# Fees of more than 500 govt services slashed

28,000 government employees eligible for promotion

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

Based on the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to cancel and reduce fees of certain sectors, the Ministry of Finance has stated that more than 500 government services will be affected by the order and that the new rates will be applicable starting January 1, 2022.

In a statement, the ministry said fees of 548 government services will be reduced ranging from 17 to 96 per cent. 'The details of the fees will be available on the ministry's website,' the statement said. It also confirmed that it has prepared guidelines with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, and municipalities regarding the reduction of service fees.



(Image for illustrative purpose)

*Employees who have been eligible for seniority since 2011 will be promoted. The decision will come into effect from January 1, 2022*

Eng Redha bin Juma al Saleh, chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, informed that reducing service fees will incentivise the facilities provided by the government to the business sector and that the move represents a qualitative leap to stimulate the national

economy. "It is an important addition to the elements of investment attraction in Oman," he said.

"These directives to support the private sector and attract foreign investment reflect the keen interest of His Majesty the Sultan. His keen interest is also reflected

in Oman Vision 2040 and its pillars that empower the private sector and focus on achieving economic diversification."

According to Eng Saleh, these directives, which coincide with the sultanate's celebrations of the 51st National Day, are a noble gesture from His Majesty the Sultan for the private sector and support for foreign investment.

He invited the private sector and business owners to take advantage of this incentive and contribute to strengthening the national economy.

## Employees eligible for promotion

Following His Majesty the Sultan's directives to promote government employees, the Ministry of Labour (MoL) has stated that more than 28,000 employees are eligible for promotion.

In a statement, MoL clarified that employees who have been eligible for seniority since 2011 will be promoted. 'The decision will come into effect from January 1, 2022, and all relevant government units will take the necessary efforts to implement the directives of His Majesty the Sultan,' the MoL statement said.

Citizens were unanimous in their view that such decisions of good leadership are key to the country's economic stability. "These days, good leaders tend to be business oriented both internally and internationally for the sake of country's economy and stability. This was seen with the Late Sultan Qaboos and the same is being followed by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. When citizens get good benefits, it helps them have better lives and trust. It improves the country's economy and security," said Mohammed Nasser al Harthi, an entrepreneur based in Muscat.



(Muscat Daily)

## Omani diplomat presented Japan's prestigious honour

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

The Government of Japan announced conferring the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star on H E Salem Nasser al Maskri, former secretary general of the Higher Education Council of Oman. The event was held on Wednesday at the residence of H E Kobayashi Toshinori, Ambassador of Japan.

Japan announced awarding the order on November 3, 2020, in recognition of H E Maskri's outstanding contribution to promote friendly relations and mutual understanding between Japan and Oman in the field of education, particularly academic exchange. The presentation ceremony was delayed due to the concerns over COVID-19.

Speaking at the ceremony, H E

Toshinori said, "I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect for H E Maskri on behalf of the government of Japan. It is an honour approved by the Emperor himself and one can see Japan's state stamp on the certificate. The valuable medal and certificate needed to be delivered here with the respect it demands. Hence I had to ask a diplomatic courier and not a private one to bring these across from Tokyo. I am very privileged to finally present the honour in the presence of other distinguished guests."

Accepting the order, H E Maskri said that Oman and Japan have shared good trade and cultural relations since decades despite being separated by 8,000km. He added that opportunities of cooperation in the field of science and technology between the two countries continue to grow.

## Oman Sustainability Week Awards launched, to be held on March 13

Awards to recognise outstanding contributions in areas of sustainability and corporate responsibility

Muscat - To promote sustainability as an integral part of business practices, three leading companies have joined hands to launch the Oman Sustainability Week (OSW) Awards on March 13, 2022, at W Hotel, Muscat, hosted by Petroleum Development Oman under the patronage of Ministry of Energy and Minerals.

Oman Environmental Service

Holding Company (be'ah), PDO and CONNECT, a well-established player in the events industry in the Middle East, are coming together to hold the week.

The initiative is being organised in collaboration with the globally renowned Centre of Sustainability and Excellence (CSE) and is aimed at promoting exemplary accomplishments by

corporations to embed sustainability as an integral part of their business practices.

'These prestigious annual awards of national importance are aligned with the UN Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the sustainability initiatives identified in Oman Vision 2040. The key areas of focus are clean water and sanitation, affordable and

clean energy, industry innovation and infrastructure, climate action and life on land,' a press release said.

The main objective of the OSW Awards is to raise awareness on sustainability issues and to support companies and organisations in integrating responsible and sustainable practices into their corporate strategy. The long-term goal is

to recognise organisations' impact in the areas of sustainability and encourage their commitment towards sustainability targets.

The awards are part of the Oman Sustainability Week, a week-long event comprising an exhibition, conference, thought leadership summit and site visits. The week, scheduled between March 13 and 17, 2022, is

a national platform that aims to highlight the sultanate's commitment to sustainability leadership through innovative strategies aligned with the UN SDGs and to engage the national development stakeholders to present Oman as a model for sustainable development.

Submissions for the OSW Awards will open from November 15, 2021, to January 1, 2022.

## CONDOLENCES

The entire staff board members  
**FUTURE GROUP & H.E. Dr HAMMAD AL GHAFRI**  
Express their heartfelt condolences to  
**Mr. INAYAT SIBTAIN NAQVI & FAMILY**  
On the passing away of our beloved



**Mr. SAYED ALI SIBTAIN NAQVI**  
On 10.11.2021

(Former National Hockey Coach - India/Oman, Oman Olympic Committee  
(Technical advisor 1983 - 2003), Future Management & Economic Consultant

WE PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY TO REST HIS SOUL IN PEACE



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| MARKET WATCH |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| MSM30        | 4,036.91  |
| BSE Sensex   | 60,352.82 |

| FOREX RATES<br>(RO1 equals) |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Indian Rs                   | 192.80 |
| Pakistani Rs                | 448.18 |
| Bangladeshi Taka            | 222.77 |
| Philippine Peso             | 130.01 |
| Sri Lankan Rs               | 524.63 |

\*Rates as on November 10  
Source: xe.com

## BRIEFS

### Biden says reversing US inflation spike a 'top priority'

Reversing the wave of inflation that drove US consumer prices to a 30 year high in October will be a 'top priority', President Joe Biden said on Wednesday. "Inflation hurts Americans pocketbooks, and reversing this trend is a top priority for me," Biden said after government data showed consumer prices accelerated in October, rising 6.2 per cent over the past year. It was the largest annual jump in the consumer price index (CPI) since November 1990.

# KCA Deutag wins \$185mn contracts in Oman, Saudi

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

The UK-based global drilling, engineering and technology services provider, KCA Deutag, has been awarded land drilling contracts worth almost US\$185m from leading hydrocarbon exploration and production companies in Saudi Arabia and Oman. 'Multiple rig extensions have been confirmed in Saudi Arabia, representing 13 years' work across three rigs, and in Oman, one-year contract extensions have been awarded for two heavy 2000hp rigs,' KCA Deutag said in a statement on its website. Simon Drew, president - land drilling at KCA Deutag, said, "These awards are a sign of rising confidence in our core markets as we increase and sustain activity following the COVID-19 pandemic challenges and resulting



reduction in oil demand. We have invested significantly in the Middle East and these contract extensions illustrate that our

strong operational and technological performance is delivering value for our clients in the region."

"The awards of these contracts contribute towards building a strong and secure future for KCA Deutag in key core markets and stimulate further growth as we leverage our group-wide experience and expertise to further develop our customer-centric, Well of Innovation technologies and continue to make our rigs more energy efficient," he added. KCA Deutag is one of the world's leading drilling and engineering contractors working onshore and offshore. It operates approximately 110 drilling rigs in 20 countries, employing staff in Africa, Europe, Russia, the Middle East, the Caspian Sea and Canada. KCA Deutag's corporate headquarters are in Aberdeen, UK. The company has a very strong presence in the Middle East where it is one of the largest owners and operators of drilling rigs.

# Dubai's Mashreq Bank hit with \$100mn US fine

Washington, US - New York financial regulators on Tuesday hit Dubai's Mashreq Bank with a US\$100mn fine due to transactions with Sudan that violated US sanctions, officials said. The fine was one of several actions by US regulators requiring the bank to fix lapses in its processes to ensure its overseas branches comply with US sanctions. The breaches involved the bank's London office handling payments through the US financial system without making clear they were going to a Sudanese entity, violating the 1997 sanctions Washington imposed on Khartoum for its support of terrorism, according to the documents. The fine by the New York State Department of Financial Services 'resolves the Department's investigation in illegal and non-transparent payments related to Sudan that Mashreqbank processed through financial institutions in New York state, including Mashreqbank's own New York branch, between 2005 and 2014'. Between 2005 and 2009, the

bank processed prohibited payments totaling more than US\$4bn, according to federal and New York state authorities. The bank's 'actions to circumvent those regulations were illegal and dangerous and will not be tolerated in an institution that has enjoyed the benefits of doing business in New York', Acting DFS Superintendent Adrienne Harris said in a statement. The Federal Reserve also took action against the bank, with a 'cease and desist order' that requires the bank to present a plan to correct deficiencies in its operations. The Fed said the order 'requires Mashreq Bank to implement an enhanced programme to ensure global compliance with US sanctions administered by the US Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)'. Meanwhile, OFAC found the bank in violation of the sanctions 'in lieu of a civil monetary penalty' since the company agreed to make changes and has cooperated with the investigation. AFP

# CBO issues RO74mn treasury bills

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

A tender of the government treasury bills (issue number 549) was announced this week by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO). Total value of the allotted treasury bills amounted to RO74mn, for a maturity period of 91 days, from November 10, 2021 until February 9, 2022. Average accepted price reached RO99.816 for every RO100 bill, while minimum ac-

cepted price arrived at RO99.815. Average discount rate and average yield reached 0.7363 per cent and 0.7377 per cent, respectively. Interest rate on the repo operations with the CBO is 0.5 per cent, while the discount rate on treasury bills discounting facility with the central bank is 0.75 per cent. Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance. These instruments provide 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. The government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures.

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# MENA IPOs raised \$1.8bn in Q3

Dubai, UAE - The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region saw four initial public offerings (IPOs) during the third quarter of 2021 which raised total proceeds of US\$1.83bn. The number of IPOs increased to four from one in the third quarter of 2020. The year-to-date total number of IPOs stands at eight in the MENA region so far this year, with a combined value of US\$2.26bn. Direct list-

ings continued their momentum with seven such listings occurring in the third quarter of 2021. The four IPOs in the third quarter this year were Al Yah Satellite Communications Co (Yahsat), Tanniah Food Co (Tanniah), Mataam Bayt Al-Shatira Lilwajbat Alsariya Company (Burgerizzr) and Arabian Internet and Communications Services Co (Solutions by stc). The Yahsat listing is the first

IPO to occur on the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX) since 2017, raising US\$730.6mn by offering 40 per cent of its shares. Equity markets have also had an exceptional year so far, with the ADX continuing to be the top performer with a year-to-date return of 52.6 per cent. Saudi Arabia's Tadawul is the second-best performing MENA market with a year-to-date return of 32.3 per cent.

# MSX inches up as volumes rise

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

The benchmark index of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) on Wednesday slightly inched up 0.08 per cent to close at 4,036.91 points. Trading activity at the bourse improved compared to the previous session. Among sectoral indices, Financial and Industrial indices increased by 0.23 per cent and

0.13 per cent, respectively, while Services index marginally decreased 0.08 per cent. MSX Sharia index decreased 0.15 per cent to close at 549.57 points. Trading activity increased on Wednesday as volumes rose 68 per cent at 14.6mn shares compared with 8.69mn shares traded in the previous trading session. Market turnover also jumped 140 per cent to RO2.49mn compared with RO1.03mn in the previous

session. Top gainers for the day were National Aluminium Products (3.47 per cent), Al Anwar Investment (3.09 per cent), Oman Cables Industry (2.97 per cent) and Al Madina Takaful (2.11 per cent). Top losers were National Finance (-6.25 per cent), Al Anwar Ceramics (-2.3 per cent), HSBC Bank Oman (-2.15 per cent) and Muscat Finance (-1.7 per cent).

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# China's slowdown casts doubts on global economy

Washington, US - The Chinese economy, weighed down by electricity shortages and a vast real estate crisis, has lost its lustre recently, to the point where economists are starting to question its impact on the global growth it has helped drive for more than 20 years.

The difficulties of the real estate sector in China triggered by the troubles of giant Evergrande could pose risks for the world economy and affect the United States, the US Federal Reserve warned in its report on financial stability released on Monday.

That is a marked change of tone from September, when Fed chairman Jerome Powell still believed the world's largest economy was not really directly exposed to difficulties in China.

Evergrande, estimated to be worth some €260bn, is one of the biggest companies in China. Its financial situation is closely scrutinised because its collapse



A residential complex is seen under construction in China (AFP)

would deal a serious blow to the growth of the Asian giant.

The real estate sector is estimated to account for 25-30 per cent of China's GDP. In the third quarter, GDP, suffering drag from the Evergrande crisis, grew by 4.9 per cent year-on-year, down from 7.9 per cent in the second quarter.

In October, the International Monetary Fund revised down-

wards its expansion forecasts for China, counting on 8 per cent, or down 0.1 per cent. Its chief economist Gita Gopinath stressed that the institution is 'paying very close attention' to developments in the Evergrande crisis.

China is expected to experience an average growth of around 3.5 per cent for the next decade, or about half the growth rate of the 2010s, according to

Conference Board projections.

"The economic slowdown in China represents a kind of extinction of engines for the world economy," said Gregory Daco at Oxford Economics.

However, he noted that 'the dynamic still remains favourable for the moment', especially since the slowdown in China is partly offset by 'relatively robust growth in the United States' and in Europe.

"We are witnessing a kind of pendulum effect which made it possible to avoid a pronounced slowdown in the third quarter of the world economy," and this effect will undoubtedly continue until the end of the year, Daco said.

In the longer term, the inevitable slowdown in Chinese growth, which is also linked to the aging of its population, will lead to a reshuffle of regional economies.

AFP

# Emirates airline on 'recovery path' as losses cut by half

Dubai, UAE - Emirates airline said it was on the path to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic on Wednesday as six-month losses dropped by more than a half from a year earlier.

The Dubai-based carrier posted an April-September loss of US\$1.6bn, compared with US\$3.4bn during the same period in 2020.

"Across the group, we saw operations and demand pick up as countries started to ease travel restrictions," chief executive officer Sheikh Ahmed bin Saeed al Maktoum said in a statement.

"This momentum accelerated over the summer and continues to grow steadily into the winter season and beyond."

Revenue was up 86 per cent year-on-year and passenger numbers rose 319 per cent to 6.1mn, Emirates said, adding that cargo volumes had recovered to 90 per cent of pre-pandemic levels.



The airline also received a US\$681 capital injection from its owner, the Dubai government, following a US\$3.1bn payment announced earlier.

In June, Emirates announced its first annual loss in more than three decades after the coronavirus crisis forced it to suspend operations and slash staff last year.

"While there's still some way to go before we restore our operations to pre-pandemic levels and return to profitability, we are well on the recovery path," Sheikh Ahmed said. Like other major carriers, Emi-

rates began announcing heavy layoffs when its fleet of A380 superjumbos and Boeing 777s was grounded last year.

On Wednesday, it said the overall group workforce has shrunk again by 2 per cent to 73,571, but a recruitment drive is underway prioritising employees who were furloughed or made redundant.

"The strong revenue recovery reflects quick return of passenger demand wherever flight and travel restrictions were eased around the world," the Emirates statement said. AFP

# US channels infrastructure funds to ports

Washington, US - As overwhelmed American ports leave ships carrying goods for the Christmas shopping season idling, the White House on Tuesday said funds from a recently passed infrastructure overhaul would be used to sort out the snarls.

The US\$1.2tn bill Congress passed last week with both Democratic and Republican votes was a boost for President Joe Biden.

In a call with reporters, senior administration officials said ports will be allowed to direct leftover funds from other projects towards efforts to relieve congestion immediately.

While the President has yet to sign the bill into law, the officials said that within the next 60 days, the Army Corps of Engineers will begin designating port and inland waterway projects where US\$4bn it allocates for their modernisation can be spent.

The government will also begin the process of modernising the country's border inspection facilities over the next 90 days.

"It's important to point out that the entire goods movement system is assisted greatly through the bipartisan bill," one of the officials told reporters.

The supply chain snarls are a global phenomenon but they have been blamed for causing delays and shortages of goods that have pushed US inflation higher.

The White House had earlier announced the Port of Los Angeles would begin 24-hour operations to address the many ships waiting offshore to unload.

AFP

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## TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

**China Petroleum Pipeline Engineering Company Limited Oman Branch (CPP), is an EPC Contractor, invites companies to participate in the following tender:**

| Estimated Scope Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Tender Documents Fee |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Backfilling of Underground laid RTRP pipes with approved backfilling material as per project specification with layer of 150 mm with min 95% compaction result.<br>2. Layers of backfilling may vary at different location as per depth of services laid.<br>3. Final layer should be compacted with heavy compactor.<br>4. Route marker to be placed as per specification. | Free                 |

Legal entities, domestic Omani and foreign companies who meet the following minimum qualification criteria are eligible to quote in Tender:

- Priority to Oman local companies, or local agent appointed by foreign companies,
- Capability to submit a performance bond of ten percent of total value.
- Complying with the CPP's project execution schedule.
- ISO 14001 and OHSAS18001 in valid period are mandatory.
- Having direct experience of similar jobs in the last five years.
- Agree to complete the further prequalification undertaken by CPP.

All interested bidders shall submit a written application letter printed on Bidder's letter head signed by the Bidder's authorized Person to [rasmakazpro@cnpc.com.cn](mailto:rasmakazpro@cnpc.com.cn); [cppomanecd@cppmde.com](mailto:cppomanecd@cppmde.com) over a period before **17th NOV, 2021** stating the following details: Full name of Bidder, phone number, e-mail address, contact person, tender name and tender title. Any application received after **17th NOV, 2021**, shall not be entertained.

The ITB documents will be issued via email by CPP later. The bidders shall bear all cost arising from or incidental to the preparation, clarification, finalization and delivery of their bid proposal.

CPP is not obliged to accept the bid with least prices or any other bids. CPP reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or; any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground for the CPP's action.

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# NBO and Tibiaan launch home finance packages

National Bank of Oman (NBO) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Tibiaan Properties to provide an ultra competitive home finance package starting from just 4.45%.

Tibiaan Properties is one of the leading real estate companies in Oman, managing a rich portfolio of apartments, villas, condos and land, as well as commercial real estate, a press release said.

The partnership will allow customers to secure financing for their first home, their new home or investment properties at the best rate on the market. With projects underway in prime areas of Muscat, Tibiaan Properties possesses a profound and clear understanding of the real estate market to find buyers the perfect home.

Tariq Atiq, chief retail and digital banking officer at NBO, said, "Purchasing a property is an important decision and we are here to make the process smooth and seamless.

Our partnership with Tibiaan Properties gives customers access to a variety of options to suit every need and every budget, and with attractive financing options for prospective buyers we are able to support them every



step of the way."

Fahad al Ismaili, CEO at Tibiaan Properties, said, "We are delighted to partner with NBO to make buyers' dreams of owning a home or investing in their future a reality.

Our astute knowledge of the sector and market trends creates even more value and potential growth for owners and investors while contributing to the development of the national

economy."

NBO offers a wide range of home loan options with no maximum cap and long repayment terms of up to 25 years.

The Bank's doorstep service and easy processing through a dedicated Mortgage Direct Sales Team and Operations Unit advises and updates buyers at every stage to make the process simple and rewarding.

Tibiaan Properties' key projects of Ghoroob, Al Hail Views, Areej Residential Complex, Boulevard Tower and The Beach offer high-quality community living in the heart of Muscat.

Maximising space and seamlessly blends modern urban décor with timeless themes, each development comes finished to the highest standards with plenty of customisable options to make each house feel like home.

# Bank Nizwa introduces ATM cardless withdrawal facility

Bank Nizwa has been steadfast in aligning itself to the broad objectives of Oman Vision 2040 and spearheading digital innovation in the banking sector. With its mobile banking app recognised for its versatility, the bank has announced the addition of new features to further enhance the user experience and make digital banking even more convenient for its customers.

Adding a unique feature, Bank Nizwa's mobile banking app has reduced the need to carry a physical card, giving customers the option to use only their mobile app to withdraw cash from the ATMs. The new feature ensures a convenient and safe method for customers to withdraw cash at any time where all they need to do is log in to their Bank Nizwa Mobile App and initiate a Cardless Cash Withdrawal service, a press release said.

"At Bank Nizwa, we are driven by the zeal to come up with innovative ways to stay connected with our customers. Embracing digitalisation and technological innovation has become essential to serve customers better, develop flexible and cost-effective solutions, and keep pace with the constantly evolving digital world," said Arif Maqbool al Zaabi, assistant general manager Retail Banking, Bank Nizwa.



"Versatile mobile applications not only allow banks to bring their services to the clients' fingertips but also help users keep a check on their spending and saving patterns. Guaranteeing the same seamless, intuitive experience for users, the added features on the mobile banking app have been thoughtfully created and designed keeping in mind the varying needs of our customers. At Bank Nizwa, we want to create an unmatched digital banking experience which will also encourage our customers to bank on-the-go," he added.

Recognising processes that are time-consuming and making them efficient, quick and hassle-free has been instrumental in the success of the app. In addition, customers can open an additional savings account and request advance salary through the app. A one-step mobile banking registration, card activation and pin setup ensure that the most fundamental step to setting up an account can be done swiftly by using only the app. With a keen focus on user convenience, customers can also activate their new debit cards directly through the app. With essential functions like these made available on the app, it reduces the need for customers to physically visit the bank's branches.

The enhanced version of the app helps manage other features like activating/deactivating purchase and withdrawal transactions, international debit card transactions and online shopping for non-secure websites. For making the process of banking easier, common tasks like resetting debit card pins is simplified.



# Nakheel concludes global dates market participation

Nakheel Oman Development Company concluded its participation in the global dates market corner of the 14th edition of Yummex Middle East this year, which lasted for three days.

The corner of the global dates market is dedicated to major date production companies, distributors, hotels, restaurants, retail stores and other traders specialised in the dates sector, in order to discuss opportunities to supply fresh and dried dates products and other related date products, a press release said.

In its participation, the company focused on marketing Omani dates by introducing visitors to the Million Date Palm

Plantation Project, which is one of the largest pioneering projects in the sultanate in the dates sector.

Nakheel Oman showcased its three brands - Tamrah, the luxury brand committed to provide customers with products made from gourmet dates, Nizwa, which provides high quality natural dates targeting local and international retail markets, and Zad, targeting wholesale in local and international markets and export.

The company's corner witnessed a great demand from suppliers, retailers and global wholesalers. It seeks to create a commercial exchange for dates.

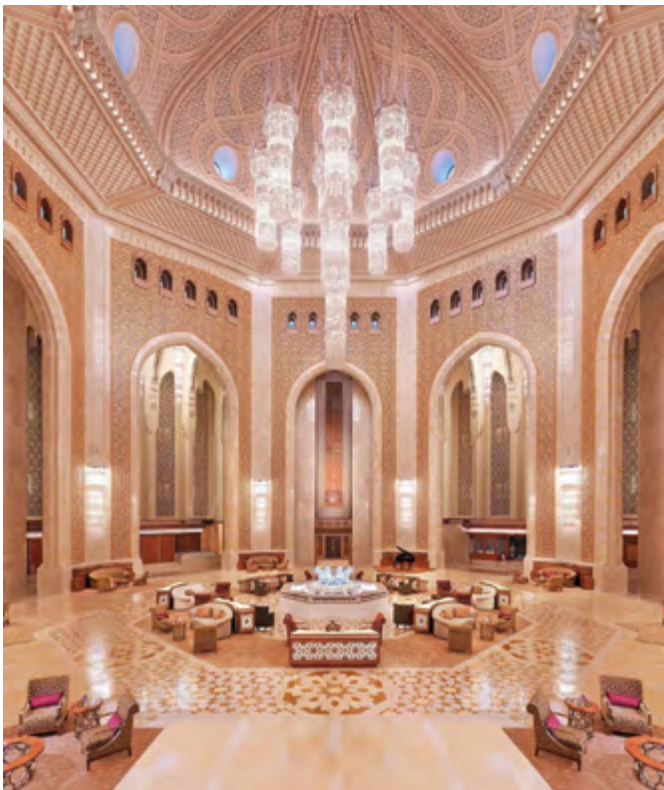
# Al Bustan Palace floats new offers

Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, a private and lavish resort located between the Sea of Oman and the Al Hajar Mountains, has launched an exciting new range of exclusive offers and luxurious experiences for guests and families to enjoy for the coming months.

Guests visiting Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz-Carlton Hotel, for a family getaway rather than business are in for a treat, as they will get to experience all the facilities the resort has to offer, such as the infinity pool, non-motorized water sports activities, and an array of daily kid's activities, a press release said.

Families can also enjoy 50% savings on their second room for children up to 16 years old. Breakfast is available for two guests per room, and kids below six years old can also enjoy free dine-in and breakfasts. Also, families can enjoy complimentary use of Ritz Kids facilities and selected non-motorized water sports.

The 50% discount applies to the lower room rate and inter-connecting or adjacent room upon availability. There are a limited number of rooms available on this package, and blackout dates may apply, so guests



should reserve a week in advance to avoid disappointment.

With many activities catering to their every wish and need, guests staying four or more nights can enjoy a 25% discount along with luxury accommodation, creating the perfect addition to a relaxing weekend. Breakfast is available, and children under six years old will enjoy complimentary dining.

Travellers can embark on a quintessential journey through the most remarkable hotels and resorts in the Middle East with The Ritz-Carlton. With this exclusive offer, guests can explore five gems of hospitality uniquely bringing together a rich legacy of heritage and luxury in Oman, Qatar, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

# Ooredoo offers 25% Bonus Data plans with Hala

Ooredoo Hala users can select from a variety of plans tailored to their liking and pocket. Making it even easier to stay in touch, subscribers have seven plans to choose from, that include a mix of data, voice and social data, all backed by Ooredoo's fantastic network. Young, old, local, expat, student, worker - there's sure to be something for everyone.

Putting customers' digital needs and experience first at all times, Hala plans give users everything they need and what's

more, they're great value. From the Hala RO2 plan that comes with 1GB local data and 500MB social data, 50 local minutes and 25 cross minutes (local, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), to the Hala RO18 plan, which comes with 30 GB local data, 600 local minutes and 75 cross minutes (local, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) and 25% bonus data on renewals, and everything in between, users will be able to chat, surf, play and browse however and whenever they want.



# UAE Maritime Week gains wide support from stakeholders

Held under the UAE Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure, UAE Maritime Week has garnered support from industry stakeholders that have significantly contributed to the growth of the maritime sector in the Middle East region.

Organised by Seatrade Maritime, part of Informa Markets, the week will connect maritime markets in the Middle East by bringing together ship owners, industry suppliers and key decision-makers from the region for several events including the flagship Seatrade Maritime Middle East (SMME); Seatrade Maritime Awards Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and Africa; Global Maritime Club round table; Maritime Leaders Forum and Experi-



Sheikh Nasser Majid al Qasimi

ence Maritime, a press release said.

As one of the most crucial initiatives that will prove vital in aiding the growth of the sector, the



UAE Maritime Week will be held at a critical time during Expo 2020 Dubai and the International Maritime Organisation elections.

Sheikh Nasser Majid al Qasimi, assistant undersecretary for Infrastructure and Transport at the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure in UAE, said, "The maritime sector globally has witnessed unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, we have braved through that phase, and are now ushering in a rebound phase. Despite the pandemic, last year the UAE recorded foreign trade worth \$532,774 million.

"Our GDP is expected to grow to 2.1 per cent this year and by 4.2 per cent in 2022 as esti-

mated by the UAE's Central Bank. The maritime sector will undoubtedly contribute to this growth.

To ensure continued progress, apart from the support of government and private sector organisations, the role of industry initiatives like UAE Maritime Week is integral."

Sheikh Saeed bin Ahmed bin Khalifa al Maktoum, executive director, Dubai Maritime City Authority said, "Following our vision to create a safe and vibrant maritime industry, we are aiming to build effective collaborations with government authorities, private sector organisations and relevant stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth of the sector in all aspects."

# Sohar International enters into strategic alliance with Vodafone

Sohar International recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Vodafone. The signing ceremony was held at Vodafone head office witnessed the presence of key officials from both parties with the partnership agreement being signed between Khalil Salim al Hedaifi, chief retail banking officer of Sohar International and Sayyed Fahad Abdulaziz al Busaidi, chief support service officer at Vodafone.

"Sohar International has demonstrated unfaltering dedication in aligning itself to the diversification goals outlined in Oman Vision 2040 and has played a vital role in boosting various sectors through strategic alliances with key players. Through this agreement, Sohar



International has partnered with Vodafone on strategic alliance, and potential future collaboration between the two companies, seeking opportunities to boost modernisation, enhance customer satisfaction and expand the communication networks in the country," said Khalil Salim al Hedaifi, chief retail banking officer at Sohar International.

"Vodafone has been recog-

nised as an international leader in telecom and we are indeed proud partner with the brand. With a strong track record attesting to its business excellence, we are certain that this partnership will be mutually beneficial. Meanwhile, our expert team of professionals will offer their unconditional support and assistance to Vodafone as they establish their presence in the country," he added.

"We are proud to support partnerships that provide opportunities for mutually beneficial business ventures. Signing the MoU marks the beginning of a long-term collaboration, and we will continue to encourage future projects with Sohar International," said Sayyed Fahad al Busaidi, chief support services officer.



Assila al Yahmadi

## Khedmah offers unique services in South Batinah

Revered as one of the leading investment and services companies in the sultanate, Oman Investment & Finance Co (Khedmah) constantly strives to deliver its smart solutions to all segments of the community across Oman.

Over the past few years, Khedmah has remained committed in its approach towards analysing market trends, providing new services and expanding its reach to meet customers' needs in line with the latest urban developments.

In Al Batinah South Governorate, Khedmah delivers its unique services through 10 branches. These branches are located in the wilayats of Al Suwaiq, Al Bidaya, Al Musan'a, Barka, Al Hoqain, Nakhl, Wadi Al Ma'awil and Al Awabi, as well as two more in Rustaq, a press release said.

ested in subscribing to Awasar and Omantel home internet products as well as Omantel postpaid packages can also easily do so at any of the Khedmah branch offices.

"South Batinah region is known for its high population density. Hence, the company decided to open several branches in the region to fulfill its expansion strategy, meet the various needs of its clients and boost in-country value. In line with Khedmah's policy of offering integrated solutions to its customers, the branches are designed as per the best practices in the industry and equipped with the latest technologies in the market. Through this endeavor, Khedmah aspires to deliver a seamless and comprehensive set of services under one roof," said Assila al Yahmadi, Khedmah's assistant manager of South Batinah region.

Through these branches and other digital platforms, customers can easily pay their electricity, water and telephone bills, recharge their phones, and also pay their electricity prepaid meter bills. In addition, customers can make payments to the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) and recharge any entertainment subscription.

These services can be availed at any of the 68 OIFC branches spread across the country, the OIFC kiosks or through its digital platforms like the website and the highly popular Khedmah phone app. Customers inter-

Additionally, the new branches have a qualified workforce trained to address the varying needs of customers while exhibiting the highest standards of service. Over the past period, Khedmah's branches and digital channels have seen a strategic transformation in terms of expansion and new innovative services. These achievements came as a result of an extensive analysis conducted by the company at all the branch locations. The analysis took into consideration various parameters like the efficiency with which services were delivered.

## Mass International transforms to digital maintenance

Mass International Co, the exclusive distributor of Schindler elevators and escalators in Oman, is currently celebrating 47 years of existence in Oman, with continued development and excellence in its capabilities in the elevator and escalator industry in Oman.

To enhance and modernise its service to clients in Oman, Mass International has signed an MoU with Focus Softnet to transform its conventional services to cloud based digital maintenance, a press release said.

The digital transformation

will automate all customer relationship management (CRM) services to clients in Oman and will enhance better capabilities in reaching to the clients and in serving them as fast as possible with all the process of customer relationship management.

This digital capabilities and

transformation into cloud-based maintenance will help Mass International to serve more and more clients and diversify its vision of modernisation for the after-care services that it provides to clients in Oman, as well as to achieve best customer excellence ob-

jectives.

General manager of Mass International, Lateef Shahdad said that it is a big milestone for the company and that cloud based digital maintenance will shift the company on a new vision with prime objectives to satisfy customers in Oman.

## ADIPEC 2021 to delve on outcomes of UN COP26

The Abu Dhabi International Petroleum Exhibition and Conference (ADIPEC) returns as a face-to-face and in-person event next week, presenting the global energy industry with its first opportunity to discuss the impact of the key decisions of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), and define the energy agenda for the next three decades.

Held under the patronage of HH Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, and hosted by the



Dr Sultan Ahmed al Jaber

Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), ADIPEC 2021 is preparing to welcome at least



Tayba al Hashemi

32 government ministers from around the world, which is a record number for the largest

and most influential global energy forum, a press release said.

Dr Sultan Ahmed al Jaber, Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, United Arab Emirates, ADNOC Group CEO and managing director, said, "ADIPEC 2021, returns at a crucial period for the energy industry as we take stock of the outcomes of COP26 and explore how we can contribute to providing practical solutions to climate change while continuing to ensure stable, reliable and carbon-

efficient energy supplies."

Tayba al Hashemi, chair of ADIPEC 2021 and CEO of ADNOC Sour Gas, told a media briefing, "I very much look forward to welcoming all of our distinguished guests to Abu Dhabi and the UAE. If the world is going to manage a secure and successful energy transition, the role of traditional energy companies, with their expertise, resources and capabilities will be critical.

After COP 26, ADIPEC 2021 will provide a much needed platform for industry leaders.

## Dubai Airshow 2021 to have international exhibitors

Dubai Airshow 2021 is set to welcome over 370 new exhibitors this year, in addition to the major local and global players in aerospace, defence, and space, which have been part of the Airshow's previous editions. The event will be held between November 14-18 at Dubai World Central (DWC), the Dubai Airshow site.

New exhibitors will be joining from a wide range of countries, including Belgium, Ukraine, the United Kingdom (UK), the United States of America (USA), Greece, Israel, Switzerland, Brazil, Czech Republic, Canada, and the Russian Federation, a press release said.

ADB Safegate, Amazon Web Services, Bellwether Industries, G42, Gibson Robotics, Huawei, Intelsat, HawkEye 360, Israel Aerospace Industries, Lilium, the defence group Mac Jee (Mac Jee Industria de Defesa), Ministry of Industry and Trade Czech Republic, MTU Aero Engines, Owl Cyber Defense, Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, RSA Global, Skyports, Sukhoi Company, Thortmen Aircraft Equipment AG, and many more will be showcasing their new technologies, products, services, and solutions, taking part in Dubai Airshow's static display, and nurturing new business relationships.



Commenting on their participation in Dubai Airshow for the first time this year, Kai-Tse Lin, co-founder and COO at Bellwether Industries, said, "For the first time, we are going to showcase not only a new testing prototype in the Middle East but also the company's concepts, future plans, and test flight footage.

Bellwether is having various exciting programmes in development or about to be initiated, we would love to partner and get engaged deeper with the industry."

Simon Jeannot, chairman of Mac Jee Industria de Defesa, said, "As a major exhibition for the civil and military aviation community, the Dubai Air Show

is essential for an air force weapons systems specialist like Mac Jee.

The Dubai Air Show is an opportunity to demonstrate unique expertise in air ordnance manufacturing. We are particularly excited to introduce DAGGER, an aerial ammunition guidance kit developed entirely in Brazil. Mac

Jee is looking forward to meeting its partners in the region and exploring new opportunities. For the defence group Mac Jee Brazil, Dubai Air Show is the most important aviation show in the world."

Boaz Levy, president and CEO of Israel Aerospace Industries, added, "IAI is Israel's leading



## Boeing 777X arrives for Dubai Airshow

The new Boeing 777X arrived at Dubai World Central yesterday, in preparation for the upcoming Dubai Airshow, a press release said.

The nearly 15-hour nonstop flight from Seattle's Boeing Field to Dubai was the first international flight and the longest flight to date for the 777X, which continues to undergo a rigorous test programme. Boeing will join the

airshow's flying programme and feature the 777X on static display, starting November 14.

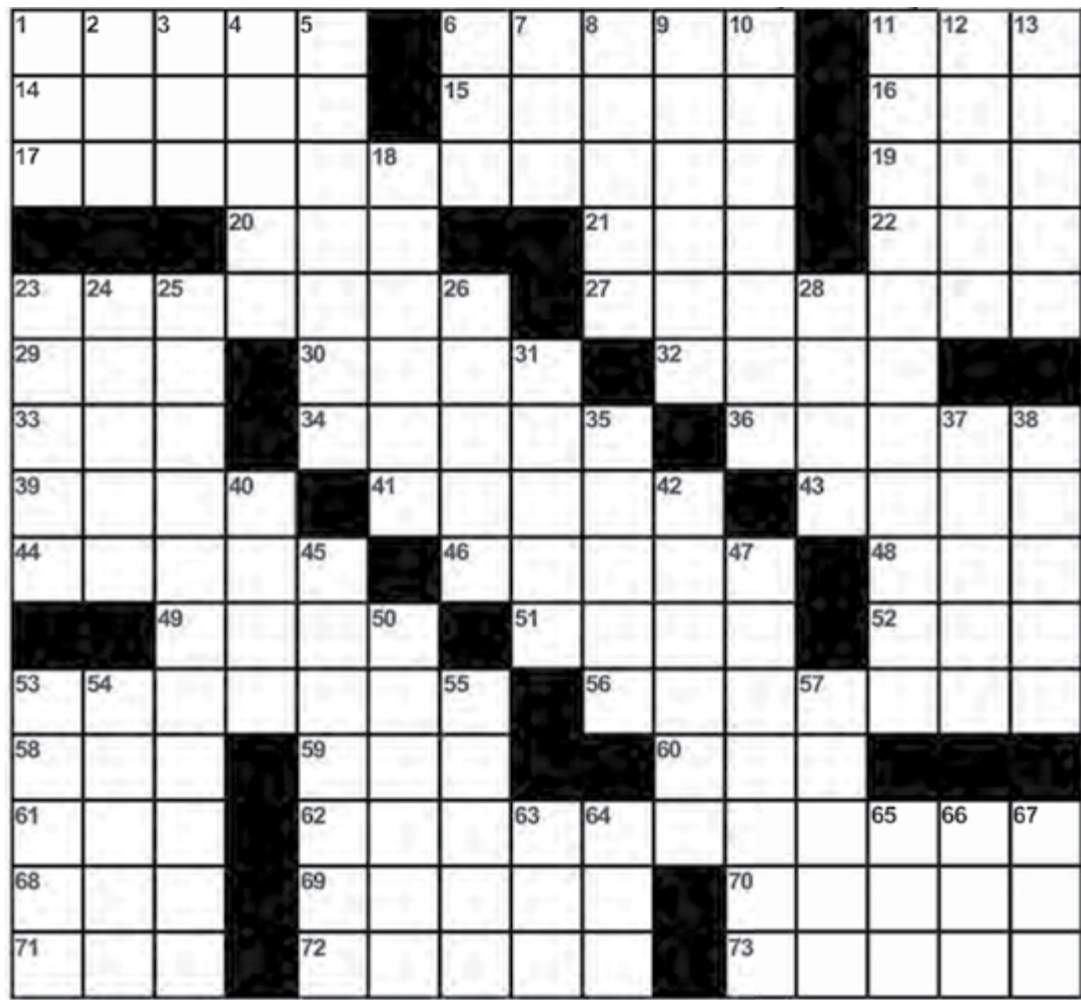
Building on the best of the industry-leading 777 and 787 Dreamliner families, the 777-9 will be the world's largest and most efficient twin-engine jet, delivering 10% better fuel use, emissions and operating costs than the competition and an exceptional passenger experience.

company in the fields of defence, aviation, aerospace, intelligence, and cyber, with combat-proven systems among the most advanced in the world.

IAI will present some of the latest and most advanced defence solutions, featuring the latest technologies in military aviation, air defence and missiles

systems, unmanned systems, special mission aircraft, radars, and cyber technology. The 2021 Dubai Airshow offers the opportunity to further expand and build long-lasting strategic partnerships with our neighbouring nations as well as to collaborate with additional local defence companies and industries."

DAILY CROSSWORD



**ACROSS**

1) Tub activities  
6) Flat-necked snake  
11) It may be skipped in alphabetization  
14) "I, Robot" author Asimov  
15) Head piece?  
16) Bottom seam  
17) "Prontol"  
19) Monte Rosa, e.g.  
20) United Kingdom brew  
21) Psychology 101 topic  
22) Trike rider  
23) International agreement  
27) Mass-to-volume ratio  
29) Outburst from Homer Simpson  
30) Cows' chew  
32) Some bread loaves  
33)\_ few rounds (box)  
34) Susan Lucci character  
36) Lauer and LeBlanc  
39) Carpenters and harvesters  
41) Cause of some food poisoning  
43) Ill-mannered one  
44) Send for consultation

46) Fabric with patterns  
48) Not to be trusted  
49) Curtain that no longer exists  
51) Hand part  
52) Feel feverish  
53) Surgically ties  
56) Class within a class  
58) Flightless bird  
59) Android offering  
60) Chairman in The Beatles' "Revolution"  
61) Damage superficially  
62) Now-or-never time  
68) Store in casks, as wine  
69) Kind of silence  
70) Crystal-bearing rock  
71) They are not positive  
72) Searched for bugs  
73) Old-fashioned music hall

E. Parker  
65 66 67

**DOWN**

1) Power-drill accessory  
2) Type of pile at a campground  
3) Mai\_ (tropical beverage)  
4) Hurriers make it  
5) High school subject  
6) "Elementary" network  
7) Dinner table crumb  
8) Emulated a sheep  
9) Horseshoe score  
10) Contrary word?  
11) "What I meant was ..."  
12) Old serf  
13) Ready for a refill  
18) Kind of study or trail  
23)\_ Allan Poe  
24) "There's\_ here but us ..."  
25) "Makes sense"  
26) Formal proclamation  
28) "Clapping" animal  
31) Ice-cream utensil  
35) Name on a wanted poster  
37) Early spring bloom  
38) What the rich live in?  
40) Evening, in Milan  
42) Light  
45) Spins, as the earth  
4 7) Commerce stoppage  
50) Certain male relative  
53) Lake\_ (Lake Geneva)  
54) Adult insect  
55) Church steeple  
57) Teased (with "with")  
63) Tentative taste  
64) Animal doc

65) Bambi's mother, for one  
66) Shakespeare's "Much\_ About Nothing"  
67) Tokyo cabbage?

**NOTE PAD**

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

**ARIES** MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Right now, you're craving substance over style. Gossiping about the latest celebrity news and shopping for new shoes simply aren't interesting activities for a brain like yours. Instead, it's a good day to check out places that are likely to make you think about confusing or challenging ideas. Forget about any expectations regarding what kind of experience is in store for you. Open your mind.

**LEO** JULY 23-AUGUST 22

Today is all about taking time to establish things. You can't be in a hurry if you want to get anywhere. Go slowly and explore what other people are looking for in life. Ask questions about your friend's goals and you just might be able to help them. And that sense of satisfaction is just what you need right now. You have a lot to share, a lot to teach, and an awful lot to learn from others. This is a day for letting new ideas sink in.

**SAGITTARIUS** NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Your dull routine won't seem so dull today. The universe has a few surprises in store for you, and you're going to enjoy every single one of them! So reach out and embrace all the chaos as it comes. After all, it isn't boring. It's stimulating your mind in a brand-new way. If you get too anxious about how things are going to work out, you'll be putting yourself through emotional distress for no reason. J

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

**TAURUS** APRIL 20-MAY 20

Someone you work with is all excited about their latest idea, but after taking a closer look at what they want to do, you're going to see big holes in their plan. You owe it to them to speak up and voice your concerns. Use your tact and charm to get them to reevaluate their suggestion and help them fine-tune it. They need a dose of reality, and you're just the person to give it to them.

**VIRGO** AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Today, you're going to be meeting a lot of new acquaintances. New names and faces will be filling your day with excitement and possibility. If you're interested in growing your social scene or expanding your career network, this is going to be a banner day. But if you're fine with where you are and the people in your life right now, simply take all this new energy for what it is. Don't try to keep track.

**CAPRICORN** DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Buzz, buzz, buzz! Your life is a hive of activity today, and you're going to be one busy bee! You will definitely be in the role of leader today. Inspiring all the people around you will be easy and logical. You don't have to employ any tricky maneuvers or mind games to get people to do what you need them to do. All you have to do is ask! In fact, everyone pretty much knows what needs to be done. It's up to you to get them motivated.

**GEMINI** MAY 21-JUNE 21

With a strong, bright energy driving the next 24 hours, you're bound to attract more attention than usual today, so don't you dare be shy! Share what you think and who you really are with people. Everyone you encounter is in an usually receptive frame of mind, so it's a great day to make new friends or romantic conquests. You can change important minds today without preaching or being too dogmatic about how you feel.

**LIBRA** SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Valuable things can be found in some surprising places, so be very careful that you don't throw out the good with the bad today. Sort through the things that are making you unhappy. Perhaps there's some sort of lesson to learn? Be sure to retain a relationship, object, or idea that makes you a little uncomfortable right now, because those are the things that will prove themselves most useful in your future.

**AQUARIUS** JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

You can't be all serious all the time. You need to start having more fun. Luckily, there should be many opportunities for fun today, so don't turn off your sense of humor or your curiosity. New members of your social group or work team could be particularly enjoyable. New people are an excellent source of good times because they offer ideas and experiences you haven't encountered before. Open up.

**CANCER** JUNE 22-JULY 22

You always behave well around your boss, but how well do you act when you're around your co-workers? Spies among them are a possibility, so make sure you're being good today. You should avoid getting involved in any idle office gossip. Steer clear of people who just love to complain but hate to offer suggestions on how to make things better. Changing your tune is easy when you realize that a better attitude equals a better career.

**SCORPIO** OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Whenever you're in doubt about how you should act today, just talk your way through it! Your way with words will turn the key and unlock many exciting new opportunities. It is about time you took a larger role in leading your circle, and your attitude will be the perfect thing to encourage people who aren't usually team players or cheerful participants. You will be able to lighten the mood and motivate some important people.

**PISCES** FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You may have thought that hitting the books and doing homework was behind you, but educating yourself should always be a part of your life's journey. Open your mind, accept that you don't know it all, and learn something new today! Equip yourself with facts and you'll always be able to state your case and back up your argument. Things will go much more smoothly if you have logic and lots of information on your side.

**Answers:** 1. c 2. a 3. b

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| T | L | A | N |
| M | I | L | W |
| L | S | O | E |
| B | G | B | U |

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.

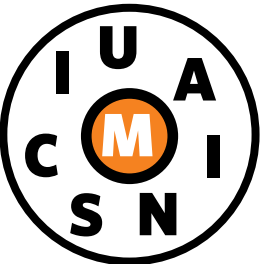
**Solution** 20-25 words: Excellent, 15-20 words: Very good, 10-15 words: Good, 5-10 words: Average

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

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

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

# On rare visit, UAE Foreign Minister shows Syria 'support' to end crisis

Damascus, Syria - The United Arab Emirates' top diplomat met Syria's President Bashar Assad in Damascus on Tuesday for the first time since Syria's war began, triggering US denunciations of efforts to normalise ties with a 'dictator'.

The visit is widely seen as a sign of regional efforts to end Assad's diplomatic isolation as Syria grapples with a spiralling economic crisis caused by years of conflict and compounded by Western sanctions.

'President Assad received UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed al Nahyan' and an accompanying delegation, Syrian state news agency SANA said.

'They discussed bilateral relations between the two brotherly countries and ways to develop cooperation in different sectors that are of common interest,' it added.

The meeting is the latest sign of warming ties between Syria and the UAE after the oil-rich Gulf state broke ties with Damascus in February 2012.

According to UAE state media, the Foreign Minister 'underlined the UAE's keenness on ensuring the security, stability and unity of Syria'.

During the talks he also expressed 'support for all efforts made to end the Syrian crisis, consolidate stability in the country and meet the aspirations of the Syrian people', the official WAM news agency said.

But the UAE's ally Washing-



Syria's President Bashar Assad (right) receives the UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al Nahyan in Damascus on Tuesday (AFP)

ton quickly expressed concern over the signal sent by the encounter.

"This administration will not express any support for efforts to normalise or rehabilitate Bashar al Assad, who is a brutal dictator," State Department spokesman Ned Price told reporters, not referring to him as President.

The UAE severed relations as Syria's repression of nationwide protests demanding regime change was escalating into a devastating war that has since left nearly half a million people

dead. Syria is backed by the Gulf state's regional rival Iran, but in December 2018 the UAE reopened its embassy in Damascus, suggesting an effort to bring the Syrian government back into the Arab fold.

The move was followed by the UAE's calling in March this year for Syria to return to the Arab League - having been a key backer of its suspension in November 2011.

## 'Arab fold'

Egypt, home of the pan-Arab body, said on Tuesday that rela-

tions should eventually be restored with Syria but that Damascus needed to first address concerns such as the humanitarian effects of the war.

Addressing the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said that Syria needed to 'show greater moderation in how it regains the trust of both the region and in its own internal dynamics'.

Damascus is struggling to secure international aid, namely from oil-rich Arab regional

neighbours that supported the opposition in the early days of the war.

Last month, the UAE's Economy Ministry said it agreed with Syria on 'future plans to enhance economic cooperation and explore new sectors'.

A ministry statement said the UAE was Syria's most prominent global trade partner, with a 14 per cent share of Syria's foreign trade.

Also last month, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan - the de facto ruler of the UAE -

discussed developments in Syria with Assad in the second call between the two leaders since March last year.

## 'Assad's lifeline'

Analyst Nicholas Heras of Newlines Institute in Washington said that the 'UAE is Assad's lifeline' in light of crippling Western sanctions.

"Damascus needs the Emirati channel... to eventually access critical funding and business acumen for an Assad-led reconstruction process in Syria," Heras said.

The UAE is not the only Arab country moving closer to Assad's government.

In October, Assad called King Abdullah II of Jordan for the first time since the start of Syria's conflict.

The two neighbours had reopened a major border crossing days earlier.

The UAE is one of the six Gulf Cooperation Council member states that took a tough stance against Damascus in 2012 and eventually recognised an opposition umbrella group as the representative of Syria.

Some regional powers see warming up to Damascus as a way of luring Syria away from the exclusive regional influence of Iran - a staunch supporter of Assad's government that has expanded its military footprint in Syria throughout the course of the conflict.

AFP

## Pregnant Yemeni journalist killed in attack

Dubai, UAE - A pregnant Yemeni journalist was killed and her reporter husband wounded in a bomb attack on their car as they travelled to hospital for her to give birth, the husband and a security source said.

"An explosive device planted in the car of journalist Mahmud al Atmi blew up as he was taking his wife Rasha Abdallah to hospital to get her baby delivered," the source from government forces told AFP.

The bombing took place in the southern city of Aden, the temporary seat of the Yemeni administration.

Abdallah (27), also a journalist, and her husband had worked with a number of local and regional media outlets. They have a two year old child.

There was no immediate claim for the bombing but Atmi said he suspected Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels of being behind the attack.

"They were trying to find out my home address," he told AFP.

Yemeni journalists have been among the casualties of the conflict.

Last year Nabil Hasan al Quaety, a Yemeni journalist who contributed to AFP, was gunned down and killed, also in Aden.

The 34 year old videographer and photographer was shot in his car by unknown assailants shortly after leaving his home.

AFP



Migrants protest against the poor living conditions outside Eleonas refugee camp in Athens on November 4 (AFP)

## Greece says Turkish boats tried to force migrants into its waters

Athens, Greece - Greek authorities on Tuesday aired a video showing a rubber dinghy filled with migrants and escorted by two Turkish boats which they said were trying to force it into Greek waters.

Athens regularly blames Ankara for not taking sufficient action to curb smugglers who send out migrants in unsafe boats and dinghies from its shores in breach of a 2016 accord with the EU.

The European Union and Ankara signed a deal in March 2016 where Turkey was to sharply reduce the flow of migrants through its territory to EU countries Bulgaria and Greece in return for billions of euros in financial aid.

Both Greece and Turkey have accused the other of failing to honour the agreement sealed after more than a million migrants and asylum seekers entered the EU in 2015.

'The video shows without a doubt the efforts of Turkish coast guard vessels to make dangerous manoeuvres to guide the dinghy to Greek waters... east of Lesbos,' the coast guard said in a statement, accompanied by the video.

"Once again Turkey has be-

haved like a 'pirate state' in the Aegean Sea, breaching its engagements with the European Union," Greek Maritime Affairs Minister Giannis Plakiotakis said.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis accused Turkey of 'instrumentalising migration' during talks with his Dutch counterpart Mark Rutte, who is on an official visit to Athens.

"Yes, we are intercepting boats that come from Turkey, as we have the right to do in accordance to the European regulation, and waiting for the Turkish coast guard to come and pick

them up to return them to Turkey," Mitsotakis said to a reporter's question about alleged Greek pushbacks. "So rather to put the blame on Greece you should put it on those who have been instrumentalising migration systematically."

The one-minute video seen by AFP shows two Turkish ships making a sharp manoeuvre in front of a dinghy carrying at least 15 migrants.

The ships and the dinghy are then seen turning back towards the Turkish coast.

AFP

## France rescues more than 200 migrants in Channel

Lille, France - More than 200 migrants were rescued as they tried to cross the Channel in makeshift boats to reach Britain, French authorities said late Tuesday.

In seven separate operations between Monday and Tuesday evening, 210 migrants, including four women and a child, were rescued and brought back to the north French coast after their boats were in difficulty.

They were brought back to Calais, Dunkirk or Boulogne and taken care of by the border police and, in some cases, firefighters or the maritime emergency medical service.

Last week, the body of a migrant was found in a water-logged boat on a beach in Wissant, alongside two people suffering from hypothermia.

AFP

## Israel startup offers virtual 'Clean Coins' for garbage collection

Haifa, Israel - As she walked her dog Luna near her northern Israel town, Elishya Ben Meir collected litter that had been reported through a new app which turns garbage into goods.

For each bag she fills in the valley near her home, she receives around ten 'Clean Coins', a virtual currency that can be redeemed for goods from participating businesses.

The green scheme aims to encourage citizens to pick up trash in a country ranked among the world's leading litter producers per capita.

"As soon as I get out to the valley, I see trash wherever I look," said Ben Meir (18).

"People drink, barbecue and leave all their garbage outside. It's really unpleasant."

Before throwing her bags of garbage into a nearby bin, Ben Meir snapped pictures of her day's haul, which was worth around 30 Clean Coins.

"Each black dot on the map represents waste reported by a user," said Adam Ran (35), co-founder and CEO of Clean Coin, demonstrating the app in his office in the northern port city of Haifa.

"By viewing the photos, I can really see the amount of trash, where exactly the trash is located, how many bags are approximately needed in order to collect it, and the amount of credit."

The company said more than 16,000 users had already signed up, of whom some 1,200 are active each week.

## 'Everyone has an interest'

Gal Lahat (21), co-founder and technical director, said he designed the app to be playful, with users earning points and unlocking different levels.

"You can see your progress compared to other users, but also when you search for the trash in the field, we want it to look like a game," Lahat said.

The compensation adds an incentive for people to get outside and clean up, he said.

"Nature benefits from it, and I also get a small personal benefit for myself that gives me motivation," Ben Meir said, before she exchanged her Clean Coins for a

joined the network, Ran said, allowing users to redeem coins for clothes, indoor climbing and hotel stays, among other options.

Some supermarkets are poised to join, he added.

The virtual currency is subsidised by several private and public organisations, in particular municipalities and regional councils that see Clean Coin as a tool to optimise waste management.

*You can see your progress compared to other users, but also when you search for the trash in the field, we want it to look like a game*

GAL LAHAT

T-shirt at a Haifa branch of the surf shop Billabong.

Clean Coin is not a cryptocurrency, with energy-intensive 'mining' of coins that requires massive computer power.

Instead, it is a kind of voucher to reward trash collection.

More than 25 brands have

"Everyone has an interest in it," Ran said.

## 'Produce less waste'

Amiad Lapidot, solid waste expert at environmental advocacy group Adam Teva V'Din, called Clean Coin 'a very good thing' in 'one of the countries which pro-

duces the most waste per capita'.

Israelis generate an average of 1.7kg of waste per person per day, compared to an average of 1.4kg per person per day in European countries, he told AFP.

In all, Israel produces around 1mn tonnes of plastic waste per year, which represents about 18 per cent of the total waste in the country, he said. That compares to a rate of 12 per cent in European countries.

Lapidot said Israelis tend to use and toss plastic bags and packaging, which pollute its coasts and green spaces, and they strongly rely on disposable dishes.

He said Clean Coin could help amplify the effects of government actions his group is promoting, such as extending existing laws levying a deposit on bottles.

Still, he said, it is only a start. "We must also absolutely find a way to produce less waste," Lapidot said.

AFP



An Israeli makes purchases with tokens from 'Clean Coin' redeemed for safely disposing of waste, at a clothing retail shop in Israel's northern city of Haifa on October 20 (AFP)

# Iran says released seized Vietnamese tanker

## ‘MV Sothys oil tanker was released by a court order after it was emptied of oil belonging to Iran’

Tehran, Iran - Iran’s Revolutionary Guards said on Wednesday they had released a Vietnamese-flagged oil tanker they seized last month in the Sea of Oman in a tense incident also involving the US Navy.

Releasing the ship ends the latest maritime confrontation in waters near the strategic Strait of Hormuz, at a time when Tehran is preparing to resume talks with major powers aimed at ending a standoff over its nuclear deal.

Iran and its arch enemy the United States gave sharply differing accounts of what happened to the *MV Sothys*, reportedly carrying 26 crew, in the incident on October 24.

Iran’s Guards claimed they thwarted an attempt by a US naval vessel to seize the *Sothys* which was carrying Iranian oil.

US defence officials rejected that account and said they took no action as Iran seized the tanker and took it into its territorial waters.

On Wednesday, Sepah News, the official website of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps



This video grab of a footage broadcast by the Iranian state TV on November 3, reportedly shows a US warship (top right), a Vietnam-flagged oil tanker (bottom) and Iranian Revolutionary Guards navy vessels, in waters near the strategic Strait of Hormuz (AFP)

(IRGC), said, ‘The seized *Sothys* oil tanker was released by a court order after it was emptied of oil belonging to the Islamic Republic

of Iran in Bandar Abbas’. The Tanker Trackers website said earlier that ‘Iran’s IRGC appears to have now released the

*Sothys*. She is currently empty and underway in a southward direction.’ ‘Though her reported destination is Dubai, her current

trajectory is the Gulf of Oman,’ the service said overnight, adding that Iran was holding the US\$50mn worth of oil which the

*Iran’s Guards claimed they thwarted an attempt by a US naval vessel to seize the Sothys. However, US defence officials rejected that account and said they took no action as Iran seized the tanker and took it into its territorial waters*

ship had received in June.

The IRGC’s Navy Commander Alireza Tangsiri mocked the US version of the incident as a ‘big lie’, in a meeting on Wednesday attended by the Guards’ commander-in-chief, Hossein Salami.

Tangsiri also praised the ‘determination, intelligence and courage of the children of Iran who defeated the Americans’.

The incident came in the wake of a series of attacks on commercial vessels in the sea lanes serving the Gulf, where a large portion of the world’s oil is produced and shipped.

Iran was blamed for a July 29 drone strike on the tanker *MT Mercer Street* operated by a London-based firm ultimately owned by Israeli shipping magnate Eyal Ofer. The strike killed a former British soldier and a Romanian. Iran denied it was responsible for that attack, or others in the area.

The argument over the Vietnamese tanker incident comes alongside efforts to restore the tattered 2015 nuclear deal under which Iran accepted strict limits to its nuclear activities in return for sanctions relief.

The United States under president Donald Trump unilaterally pulled out of the deal in 2018, leading Iran to step away from some of its commitments.

Iran agreed last week to resume discussions with major powers on November 29.

AFP



French President Emmanuel Macron (AFP)

## President Macron hosts Paris talks to keep Libya polls on track

Paris, France - French President Emmanuel Macron will host tomorrow an international conference aimed at ensuring Libya sticks to a plan to hold elections in December and turn a new page in its history, a decade after the overthrow of dictator Moammar Gadhafi.

The hydrocarbon-rich North African country has been mired in civil war since the killing of Gadhafi in a 2011 uprising, with the bloodshed drawing in competing Libya factions and Islamist groups, as well as regional powers.

Both the presidential vote on December 24, and the legislative elections, are the centrepiece of a UN plan to help restore stability, but the calendar has been under pressure as tensions resume between rival camps.

There are also fears over whether the various factions will recognise the results of the votes, which would mark a turning point in stability for a country that has become a major departure point for migrants seeking to cross the Mediterranean for Europe.

Key players attending the meeting will include US Vice President Kamala Harris, who is on a visit to France aimed at improving ties, and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al Sisi, one of Paris’s closest allies in the Middle East.

Also attending, in a rare visit to Western Europe amid long-standing tensions between Moscow and the West, is Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov.

But the level of representation

from Turkey, another key regional power, remains unclear.

“The elections are within grasp. There is a strong momentum in Libya for them to go ahead. The stability of the country is at stake,” said a French presidential official, who asked not to be identified by name.

“But there are ‘spoilers’ who are trying to derail the process,” the official said.

### Foreign forces out?

Elysee officials are at pains to present the conference as an international effort, co-presided by France, Germany, Italy, the United Nations and Libya itself.

France has faced accusations that it favoured the Moscow-educated strongman of eastern Libya, Khalifa Haftar, in the conflict with the UN-backed government in Tripoli. Paris has rejected the claims.

Macron has repeatedly urged an end to foreign military presence in Libya, notably that of Turkey, which sent in troops, as well as pro-Ankara militia units from Syria to shore up the Tripoli government.

Macron wants the conference to endorse a plan for the departure of all foreign forces and mercenaries, the French presidential official said.

The level of representation from Libya is also not clear.

Mohamed al Menfi, the head of the transitional presidential council, is expected in Paris.

But it is not certain that Prime Minister Abdelhamid Dbeibah will come amid reported tensions between him and Menfi.

AFP

## COP26 draft urges boost to emissions cuts by 2022

Glasgow, UK - A draft UN climate summit text on Wednesday urged countries to boost their emissions cutting goals by 2022 - three years earlier than planned - as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson dashed back to Glasgow to check the pulse of negotiations.

Wednesday’s text was the first indication of where nations are ten days into the COP26 talks in Glasgow, after data showed promises made so far left the world far off track to limit heating to 1.5°C.

Negotiators are tasked with accelerating national decarbonisation plans, stumping up long-promised finance for vulnerable nations and finalising rules of the Paris Agreement on carbon markets and transparency.

“Some significant issues remain unresolved and I think as we know time is not on our side,” COP26 president Alok Sharma told delegates.

“We all know what is at stake in these negotiations and the urgency of our task.”

The text, which will change as ministers begin the high-level wrangling as COP26 enters its



Protesters demonstrate outside the venue of the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow on Monday (AFP)

last two days, called for nations to ‘revisit and strengthen’ their decarbonisation plans by next year, instead of 2025 as previously agreed.

It said that limiting heating to 1.5°C - the Paris deal’s most ambitious temperature goal - ‘requires meaningful and effective action by all parties in this critical decade’.

‘Rapid, deep and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions’, said the text, were needed to avert the worst impacts of heating, which has al-

ready seen countries worldwide slammed by fiercer floods, droughts and storms.

The 2015 accord contains a ‘ratchet’ mechanism requiring countries to update emissions plans every five years.

Several large emitters missed the 2020 deadline for submitting new plans, known as nationally determined contributions.

Vulnerable nations say that the next deadline, in 2025, is too distant to deliver the short-term emissions cuts needed to avoid disastrous heating.

In what observers said was a ‘significant first mention’ of the fuels driving global warming, the draft summit called on countries to ‘accelerate the phasing out of coal and subsidies for fossil fuels’.

Previous climate summit decisions and the Paris Agreement itself do not so much as mention fossil fuels, focusing instead on emissions. But the fossil fuel reference contained no deadline and it was unclear it would make the final text.

AFP

**France to build more nuclear reactors**

Paris, France - President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday announced France would launch a drive to build new nuclear energy plants in order to better meet growing energy and environmental challenges.

“To guarantee France’s energy independence and achieve our objectives, in particular carbon neutrality in 2050, we will for the first time in decades relaunch the construction of nuclear reactors in our country,” Macron said in an address to the nation.

Macron, speaking as the COP26 climate summit continues in Glasgow, vowed that France would also continue to develop renewable energy.

AFP

## Ethiopia detains 72 World Food Programme drivers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - The United Nations said on Wednesday that Ethiopia had detained 72 drivers working for the World Food Programme (WFP) in the country’s conflict-torn north.

The news, which came a day after the UN reported the arrests of 22 employees in the capital Addis Ababa, is likely to further inflame tensions with the government following a decision in September to expel seven senior UN officials for ‘meddling’ in the country’s affairs.

A UN spokesperson said the new detentions had occurred in the capital of Afar province, on the only functional road leading into famine-threatened Tigray.

“We confirm that 72 outsourced drivers contracted by WFP have been detained in Semera. We are liaising with the Government of Ethiopia to understand the reasons behind their detention,” a UN spokesperson said.

“We are advocating with the government to ensure their safety and the full protection of their legal and human rights,” the

spokesperson added.

Officials last week announced a six-month nationwide emergency amid rising fears that fighters from the Tigray People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) and Oromo Liberation Army (OLA) rebel groups could advance on the capital.

Lawyers say arbitrary detentions of ethnic Tigrayans - commonplace during the war - have

surged since then, ensnaring thousands, with the new measures allowing the authorities to hold anyone suspected of supporting ‘terrorist groups’ without a warrant.

Law enforcement officials describe such detentions as part of a legitimate crackdown on the TPLF and OLA.

The UN on Tuesday said 22 Ethiopian staff had been de-

tained in Addis Ababa.

Six were freed while the remaining 16 were in custody on Tuesday night, UN spokesman Stephane Dujarric told reporters at the world body’s headquarters.

Information on the ethnicity of the drivers detained in Semera was not immediately available, though the UN has in the past hired ethnic Tigrayans to trans-

port food and other aid into Tigray.

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed sent troops into Tigray last November to topple the TPLF, a move he said came in response to rebel attacks on army camps.

Though the 2019 Nobel Peace laureate vowed a swift victory, by late June the TPLF had regrouped and retaken most of the region including its capital Mekele.

Since then Tigray has been under what the UN describes as a de facto humanitarian blockade.

Only 15 per cent of necessary aid has been able to cross from Semera into Tigray since mid-July, with hundreds of thousands of people living in famine-like conditions, according to UN estimates.

Last week, the UN said no aid trucks had entered northern Ethiopia since October 18.

Movement of aid workers in and out of the region by road has been barred since October 28.

AFP



# New US special envoy for Afghanistan to meet Taliban

Islamabad, Pakistan - The new US special envoy for Afghanistan will visit Pakistan this week for a meeting with the Taliban Foreign Minister and senior diplomats from China and Russia, a Pakistani official and the US State Department said.

It will be Thomas West's first trip to the region since taking over from Zalmay Khalilzad, the long-serving diplomat who spearheaded the talks that led to the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The so-called 'troika plus' meeting, due to take place today in Islamabad, will include the Afghan Taliban's new Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, a senior Pakistani government official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The State Department said earlier in the week that West also plans to visit Russia and India.

"Together with our partners, he will continue to make clear the expectations that we have of the Taliban and of any future Afghanistan government," State Department spokesman Ned Price told a briefing this week.

The senior Pakistani official said the meeting is 'primarily aimed at... finding ways to avert a humanitarian crisis and to look into possibilities of setting up an inclusive government in Afghanistan'. The United Nations has repeatedly warned that Afghanistan is on the brink of the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with more than half the country facing 'acute' food shortages and winter forcing millions to choose between migration and starvation.

West, who was in Brussels this week to brief NATO on US engagements with the Taliban, told reporters that the Islamists have 'very clearly' voiced their desire to see aid resumed, as well as to normalise international relations and see sanctions relief.

He called for unity from allies on those issues, noting that Washington 'can deliver none of these things on our own'.

**Islamic State threat**  
That includes China, with whom



US special envoy for Afghanistan, Thomas West (NATO)

the United States has clashed in recent months over issues including Taiwan. West said Beijing has a 'positive role' to play in Afghanistan.

China and Russia both confirmed they were sending their Afghan envoys to the meeting.

"China supports all international efforts that are beneficial towards promoting peace and stability in Afghanistan, and firm up consensus on all sides," Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a routine briefing. West said that while he will

visit India, he did not plan to attend a regional security dialogue on Afghanistan there on Wednesday.

Indian officials said that meeting will involve Russia and Iran as well as Central Asian nations Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajik-

*Together with our partners, Thomas West will continue to make clear the expectations that we have of the Taliban and of any future Afghanistan government*

NED PRICE



istan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Pakistan - India's arch-rival - was also invited but declined, as did China, Islamabad's close ally. Wang said Beijing would not attend for 'scheduling reasons'.

India was an enthusiastic supporter of the ousted Western-backed government of Afghanistan.

Ajit Doval, the Indian national security advisor, echoed West's call for close cooperation among regional allies as he opened the meeting in New Delhi.

"I am confident that our deliberations will be productive, useful and will contribute to help the people of Afghanistan and enhance our collective security," he said.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told a press conference on Wednesday that the group welcomes the various regional meetings.

"We have no worries, the meetings will be for Afghanistan's benefit because the entire region believes that the security of Afghanistan is for the benefit of all," he said.

West also touched on security in the region, saying the United States is concerned about a recent uptick in attacks by the Islamic State group in Afghanistan.

"We want the Taliban to be successful against them," he said.

He added that Al Qaeda's presence in Afghanistan 'is an issue of ongoing concern for us in our dialogue with the Taliban'. AFP

## Myanmar junta charges US journalist Fenster with terrorism

Yangon, Myanmar - Myanmar's junta has charged a US journalist detained since May with sedition and terrorism, which carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment, his lawyer said on Wednesday.

The military has squeezed the press since taking power in a February coup, arresting dozens of journalists critical of its crack-down on dissent that has killed over 1,200 people, according to a local monitoring group.

Danny Fenster, who had been working for local outlet Frontier Myanmar for around a year, was arrested as he was heading home to see his family in May and has been held in Yangon's Insein prison since.

The 37 year old is already on trial for allegedly encouraging dissent against the military, unlawful association and breaching immigration law.

The additional charges under Myanmar's anti-terror and sedition laws open Fenster up to a maximum sentence of life imprisonment. The trial is scheduled to begin on November 16.

"He has become quite thin," Than Zaw Aung said.

Fenster was 'disappointed' at being hit with the new charges, which were filed on Tuesday, the lawyer added.

They come days after former



Danny Fenster

US diplomat and hostage negotiator Bill Richardson met junta chief Min Aung Hlaing in the capital Naypyidaw, handing the increasingly isolated junta some rare publicity.

The former UN ambassador said he was hopeful he had brokered a deal for a resumption of visits by the International Committee of the Red Cross to prisons - which have been filled with political prisoners.

Richardson, declining to give further details, said the US State Department asked him not to raise Fenster's case during his visit.

"Danny's case has become emblematic of the utter contempt Myanmar's military has for independent media," Emerlynne Gil, Amnesty International's deputy regional director for research, said in a statement. AFP

## 21 survive Turkey building collapse with no deaths

Istanbul, Turkey - Twenty one people survived being buried under heavy debris when a two-storey building collapsed in eastern Turkey, the government said, with no fatalities reported as search operations ended early Wednesday.

The incident occurred on Tuesday afternoon on a busy street in the city of Malatya, as residents filled shops on their way home from work.

"Search and rescue operations in the collapsed Malatya building have come to an end.

Thank God there are no victims," Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu tweeted early Wednesday.

Earlier, Interior Ministry spokesman Ismail Catakli said rescue workers had pulled 13 people from the rubble, while eight others managed to escape on their own.

Witnesses and media reports said the building crumbled during planned renovation work that resulted in damage to one of the walls separating two of the ground floor restaurants. AFP

## Tunisian city on strike after death during landfill protest

Aguereb, Tunisia - A Tunisian city held a general strike on Wednesday, after a protester died of tear gas inhalation during angry demonstrations over the reopening of a rubbish dump.

Abderrazek Lacheheb (35) died early on Tuesday in Aguereb, in the Sfax region on the central coast, after security forces used tear gas to disperse protesters.

A medic and a family member said he had died of asphyxia.

The prosecution has opened an inquiry into the incident, while the Interior Ministry said the man had died as a result of a pre-existing health condition.

On Wednesday, the city observed a general strike across the public and private sectors, following a call by the powerful UGTT trade union confederation to protest what it called a 'savage intervention by security forces'.

Thousands of people joined a march against violence by security forces and demanding that the landfill site remain closed, an AFP journalist reported.

Police officers deployed heavily and used tear gas again to block protesters from reaching



Security forces face Tunisian anti-government demonstrators during a general strike in the Tunisian town of Aguereb on Wednesday (AFP)

the dump. The wider Sfax region has been gripped by weeks of protests over the rubbish crisis, which has seen trash pile up in the streets.

The Aguereb landfill, the main such site in the region, closed in September under pressure from residents, who said the facility was full and complained that toxic chemical waste was being dumped there, even though the site is only meant for household waste.

Municipalities in the province

have since refused to gather waste, calling on the state to find sustainable solutions.

Authorities decided on Monday to re-open the site, sparking a new round of protests in Aguereb.

Tunisia has long suffered difficulties dealing with the estimated 2.5mn tonnes of rubbish produced every year, dumping the vast majority in landfills and recycling only a very limited amount. AFP

## WHO looking forward to oral, nasal vaccines in fight against COVID-19

Geneva, Switzerland - The World Health Organization's (WHO) chief scientist said on Tuesday she was looking forward to the 'second generation' of COVID-19 vaccines, which could include nasal sprays and oral versions.

Soumya Swaminathan said such vaccines could have advantages over the current crop as they would be easier to deliver than injections and could even be self-administered.

Swaminathan said there were 129 different candidate vaccines that have got as far as clinical trials - being tested on humans - while a further 194 are not yet that advanced in their development and are still being worked on in laboratories.

"This covers the entire range of technologies," she told a live interaction on WHO social media channels.

"They're still in development. I'm sure some of them will prove to be very safe and efficacious and others may not."

"There could be advantages to some of the second generation vaccines... clearly if you have an oral vaccine or an intra-nasal



vaccine this is easier to deliver than an injectable," Swaminathan said.

"Ultimately we'll be able to choose the ones that are most appropriate."

"If not for COVID, we're going to use these platforms for other infections in the future," she added.

Swaminathan explained the advantages of a vaccine being sprayed into the nose, as happens in some countries with influenza vaccines.

"If there's a local immune response then it will take care of the virus before it even goes and establishes itself in the lungs and starts causing a problem," WHO's chief scientist said.

The WHO has only given emergency use authorisation to seven COVID-19 vaccines: Those created by Pfizer/BioNTech, Moderna, AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, Sinopharm, Sinovac and last week Bharat Biotech.

"None of the vaccines are 100 per cent. Nobody has ever claimed that the vaccines are going to be 100 per cent protective. But 90 per cent is a wonderful amount of protection to have, compared to zero," Swaminathan said.

"Till now, with the vaccines that we have approved, there has not been any signal which has been so worrying that we need to say, well, we need to re-think this vaccine."

AFP

## TURKEY MARKS FOUNDER'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan (top) attends a ceremony at the Anitkabir, the mausoleum of Turkish Republic's Founder Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, during the 83rd anniversary of his death, in Ankara on Wednesday; while a man (bottom) holds an image of the founder during the ceremony (AFP)

## US lawmakers' Taiwan visit provocative: Chinese official

Beijing, China - China reacted with fury on Wednesday to a visit by a delegation of US lawmakers to Taiwan, as tensions between Beijing and Taipei reach their highest in years.

China claims self-ruled Taiwan as its territory and has vowed to retake it by force if necessary, with the democratic island living under the constant threat of invasion from its increasingly belligerent neighbour.

Taiwan's Foreign Ministry confirmed the visit was arranged by the American Institute in Taiwan - Washington's de facto embassy on the island - and said it would provide 'necessary administrative assistance'.



Wang Wenbin

Beijing responded by saying the 'risky and provocative actions' are 'doomed to end in failure'. "Colluding with Taiwan independence forces is a dangerous game and playing with fire will result in burning them-

selves," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin at a press briefing, calling the visit a 'clumsy performance'.

Few details about the trip have been made public so far.

Pentagon spokesman John F Kirby confirmed at an informal briefing on Tuesday that the members of Congress travelled to Taiwan by military jet, which he said is customary for travel of this kind.

"Kirby noted that congressional visits to Taiwan are relatively common and in keeping with US obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act," the US Department of Defence said. AFP



This file photo shows refugees near the office of the top community Rohingya leader and activist Mohib Ullah, who was shot dead by gunmen in late September this year, at Kutupalong refugee camp in Ukhiya on October 5 (AFP)

## Fear stalks Rohingya camps after murders

Kutupalong, Bangladesh - Bloodstains still mark the spot where assassins gunned down Mohib Ullah, an activist who was a leading voice for the 850,000 Rohingya living in fear in Bangladeshi refugee camps.

In the weeks since the murder, a senior member of the now-shellshocked volunteer group that Ullah headed has received phone calls telling him he'll be next. And he's not alone.

"They can hunt you down the way they have brazenly shot dead our leader and so many people," Noor, too frightened to give his real name or be filmed, said. "They", he believes, are members of the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA), an insurgent group fighting the Myanmar military but also thought to be behind a wave of killings and criminal activity in the camps. ARSA has denied it killed Ullah.

Most of the Rohingya have been in the camps since 2017 when they fled a brutal military offensive in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, where the predominantly Muslim minority are reviled and seen as illegal immigrants.

Refusing to go back until they are assured of security and equal rights, the refugees remain stuck in bamboo-and-tarp shacks with no work, poor sanitation and little education for their children.

Overflowing latrines fill narrow mud lanes with excrement in monsoon season, and fires can rip through the flimsy homes in minutes during the hot summers.

By day the Bangladesh authorities provide some security. But at night the camps become the domain of gangs - allegedly linked to ARSA - that traffic millions of dollars worth of methamphetamine from Myanmar.

"The scenario is different as soon as the sun sets," Israfil, a Rohingya refugee who goes by one name, told AFP.

"The dark time is the long hours when they do whatever they want to do," he added.

who was opposed to their violence, his colleagues and rights activists say.

"He became a thorn in ARSA's side," said Nur Khan Liton, a top rights activist in Bangladesh. "ARSA was also frightened by his enormous popularity."

Three weeks after Ullah's murder in late September, gunmen and machete-wielding attackers slaughtered seven people in an Islamic seminary that had allegedly refused to pay

2019 prompted the Bangladesh army to erect barbed-wire fences around the camps. The elite Armed Police Battalion was tasked with patrolling the area.

Police have also carried out a series of security operations that have killed dozens of alleged Rohingya drug traffickers.

But although they have arrested dozens of people over Ullah's killing, they are in denial about the ARSA's activity, blaming instead 'rivalries' in the camps. "ARSA has no presence in the camps," Naimul Haque, the commanding officer of the Kutupalong camp, insisted.

**ARSA has carried out the murders to establish its full control in the camps. After the latest carnage, everyone seems to be silenced**

AN ACTIVIST

## 'Brutal carnage'

Working among the chaos and unease in the camps, Ullah and his colleagues quietly documented the crimes that his people suffered at the hands of the Myanmar military, while pressing for better conditions.

The former schoolteacher shot to prominence in 2019 when he organised a protest of around 100,000 people in the camps to mark two years since their exodus. That year he met US President Donald Trump in the White House and addressed a UN meeting in Geneva.

But his fame appears to have gone down badly with ARSA.

They saw Ullah as threatening their place as the sole voice representing the Rohingya - one

protection money to the ARSA.

"The brutal carnage bore all the marks of the ARSA. The group previously slaughtered at least two top Islamic clerics because they didn't back ARSA's violent struggle," said a top expatriate Rohingya activist.

"ARSA has carried out the murders to establish its full control in the camps. After the latest carnage, everyone seems to be silenced," he added.

## 'No presence'

After the attack on the seminary, the UN refugee agency urged the Bangladesh authorities 'to take immediate measures to improve the security in the refugee camps'.

A series of turf war killings in

## 'Extreme fear'

Members of Ullah's group are far from reassured, saying that their security concerns fall on deaf ears. Some even mutter that the ARSA and the Bangladesh security forces are in cahoots - something Dhaka vehemently denies.

Kyaw Min, a top Rohingya leader, said police assist ARSA to 'reign' at night by 'conveniently' not being around when they operate. A month before he died Ullah sent a letter, seen by AFP but which could not be independently verified, to the Bangladesh authorities.

He named 70 men in the camps he said were ARSA members, and said he and his colleagues feared for their lives. Bangladesh's refugee commissioner Shah Rezwan Hayat and camp-in-charge Atiqul Mamun denied receiving any such letter. AFP

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Photos: Syed Fasiuddin

HIDDEN GYM

# FITNESS FOR A SONG

An affordable gymnasium in Hamriya runs with a mission to bring about change in the lives of those belonging to low income groups

Syed Fasiuddin

The dusty lanes of Hamriya lead one to restaurants serving authentic Bangladeshi cuisine while people hanging out here (predominantly citizens of Bangladesh) can be seen seated around carrom-boards, enjoying cups of hot tea and sizzling pakoras at street corners, and indulging in high volume chit-chat, all of it creating a third world ambience. But away from the din at dusk, in a gymnasium located in the basement of one of the low-rise buildings, a few youth spend their time pumping iron.

As one drives past the single-lane street winding around this locale - the hub of construction workers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians and handymen delivering a range of services - one wonders whether life in these lanes has its own silver lining, because apart from socialising at street corners, there seems to be no other way to unwind after a hard day's labour.

Then, you see a youth emerging from one of the lanes with rippling muscles glistening with sweat, clad in a fake Adidas jersey and Van Heusen track pants, and you realise there's an invisible gym somewhere around. The guys standing by are happy to lead you to this oasis of fitness which has been the haunt of many youth in the area who seek affordable avenues for staying fit - the better option to idle chit-chat.

The hidden gym is run by Captain Abdullah Shiha, a winner of several medals in various bodybuilding competitions in Egypt and Oman, who spent over two decades of his 35-year bodybuilding career as a fitness manager in different gyms in Muscat.

When he thought of starting his own gym, the first thought was to make fitness affordable for all classes, says Captain Shiha who chose Hamriya as the most apt location for his maiden venture. "Hamriya is densely populated with young expat migrant workers, who cannot afford big bucks, and I thought, with a little help and



motivation, I could introduce fitness into their lives."

When Captain Abdullah Shiha was about to start his maiden venture, however, the COVID-19 pandemic came along and Hamriya (as well as Muttrah) witnessed one of the longest lockdowns in Muscat. Despite challenges, he waited patiently for months, and as soon as restrictions eased, he opened the doors to his 'Fitness for All Gym'.

### Fitness for all

Keeping his 'affordable gym' plan always in focus, Captain Shiha charges a comparatively very low fee of RO10 for a monthly membership. However, there is an added benefit to this charge. While other gyms in town charge addition fees for personal attention and coaching, Captain Shiha incorporates his 35 years of bodybuilding skills into the monthly fee - which means members get coached for no extra fee.

"When a layman takes a gym membership and walks into the gym, he does not know how to effectively use the fitness equipment to suit his own abilities and goals. Most gyms have additional coaching



Hamriya is densely populated with young expat migrant workers, who cannot afford big bucks, and I thought, with a little help and motivation, I could introduce fitness into their lives

CAPTAIN ABDULLAH SHIHA

fees up their sleeves and they bring them to the fore when members seek help. This might cost as high as RO15 - 20 per hour," he pointed out, adding that is not fair to charge extra for expected guidance.

He, however, pointed out, "Many people enter the gym expecting results in a week or two. This cannot be possible, and this is where the problems starts. Either people lose interest or hurt themselves by indulging in over usage of fitness equipment." Captain Shiha's gym membership charge is inclusive of a personal trainer fee.

### Fitness freaks

Khalfan al Rahbi, a resident of Amerat, comes to captain Abdullah's gym regularly. More than affordability, his friendly nature is what attracts al Rahbi to this gym. "He is a good person with a golden heart, I knew him for a long time. I feel I am in good hands with Captain Shiha around while I am training."

Like Rahbi, Ali Kashmiri, a resident of Muttrah, is also a fan of Captain Shiha's friendly disposition and style of training. "I started exercising under his supervision when I was in school. People who wish to join other gyms think twice because the charges

are very high in Muscat. But, RO10 is something anyone interested in fitness can afford. Other gyms need to do the same."

Amir Sohail, who lives in Hamriya, had been working out in his home town in Pakistan. However, since he migrated for work, gyming was on his back burner as he could not afford the high cost involved. "At this gym, I am not compelled to take long term membership to avail of better rates. Besides, Captain Shiha understands the financial constraints of members and is willing to go easy on those who face hard times.

Abu Talib, another Hamriya resident, recalls that his friend Nizamuddin introduced him to this gym and said he has been thankful to him for opening up vistas for fitness for him for affordable rates. "I was a newer to physical workouts but Captain Shiha guided me onto this new journey, with step-by-step training and guidance. He helped me set goals for myself and work towards getting into better shape with dedication."

### Community service

The gym has helped many a youth in Hamriya spend his time more fruitfully in the evenings. Instead of wandering around the alleys with friends, Talib, a resident of Hamriya, says he enjoys spending time building his mental and physical health. It also keeps his urge to spend on unnecessary snacking with friends under control, he said.

Nizamuddin, another resident who was fond of workouts in Bangladesh but could not afford joining a gym in Muscat, said life has a new meaning for him after joining this gym. "Since I joined this gym, my evenings are productive, I am not only taking care of my health, but also building immunity, which is so important in this COVID-19 pandemic," he said, adding, "I quit smoking to fill the void of my evenings. Fitness has taken over my life, thanks to this gym."

With more youth signing up for this affordable gym, the younger generation of expatriates in Hamriya are slowly introducing fitness into their lives as a fruitful pastime for the evenings. A new trend has begun taking shape.

WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

Spain, Italy face decisive dates to make it to Qatar

Ronaldo's Portugal 2nd in Group A

Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal are currently second in Group A, a point behind Serbia. However, they have a game in hand in the Republic of Ireland on Thursday and a better goal difference. Whatever happens there, the group will be decided when Portugal host Serbia in Lisbon on Sunday.

Reigning world champions France can clinch qualification by beating Kazakhstan in Paris on Saturday. Even a draw would be enough provided Finland fail to win earlier, but otherwise Les Bleus - without the injured Paul Pogba - can wrap up their spot in Qatar when they travel to Helsinki on Tuesday.

England are three points ahead of Poland in Group I, so the Euro 2020 runners-up will qualify by taking at least four points from games at home to Albania and away in San Marino. Belgium will win Group E by defeating Estonia.



Cristiano Ronaldo (AFP)



Spain's coach Luis Enrique (second from right) speaks with his players during a training session in Madrid on Monday (AFP)

Paris, France - The first stage of European qualifying for next year's World Cup concludes over the next week with Portugal, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands among the nations facing crucial games in the quest to make it to Qatar.

The ten group winners will secure qualification for football's global showpiece which kicks off on November 21, 2022. The ten runners-up will get another chance to qualify in play-offs next March.

Spain showed on their runs to the Euro 2020 semi-finals and the Nations League final that they are again a force to be reckoned with. However, the 2010 world champions still have work

to do to secure their place in Qatar from qualifying Group B.

Luis Enrique's side sit second, two points behind leaders Sweden. They head to Athens on Thursday to play Greece, who held them to a 1-1 draw at home in March. Failure to win this time would give Sweden the chance to clinch top spot with victory in Georgia. Otherwise the group will be decided when Spain host Sweden - including a 40-year-old Zlatan Ibrahimovic - in Seville on Sunday.

**Italy, Dutch back on big stage?**

European champions Italy, who failed to qualify in 2018, are not there yet either. With two games

left in Group C they are locked on 14 points with Switzerland, and the sides clash on Friday in Rome, five months after Italy won 3-0 there when the teams met in Euro 2020's opening game.

Whoever wins will be left requiring just a point in their final qualifier, with the Azzurri going to Northern Ireland on Monday while the Swiss host Bulgaria.

"We mustn't think that we have everything to lose," said coach Roberto Mancini. "We know what we are capable of, and if we play our game I think we will perform well. And we will have fun."

The Netherlands are tantalisingly close to returning to the World Cup after also missing out

in 2018. Louis van Gaal's side are two points clear of Norway atop Group G with a superior goal difference to that of the Norwegians or third-placed Turkey.

That effectively means a draw in Montenegro on Saturday should not damage them, as long as they then avoid defeat against Norway - who are without injured forward Erling Haaland.

The battle between Russia and 2018 World Cup runners-up Croatia in Group H is tight, with the Russians currently two points ahead before hosting Cyprus on Thursday. As long as Croatia don't slip up in Malta, they can claim top spot when they host Russia in Split on Sunday.

AFP

Brazil, Argentina eye Qatar World Cup qualification

Montevideo, Uruguay - Brazil host Colombia in Sao Paulo on Thursday knowing victory will book their ticket to Qatar with six World Cup qualifiers to spare following a near perfect record so far.

Even a draw for the Selecao would be enough if Uruguay lose at home to Argentina on Friday, and Brazilian media have reported that coach Tite is already planning to head to the Arab Cup

in Qatar next month to check out World Cup venues and facilities.

Publically, though, Tite is not getting ahead of himself with a trip to face arch rivals Argentina in San Juan on the horizon next week.

"We have two important matches against two teams that, for me, are of the highest level," said Tite.

"A good performance and a good result against Colombia will

provide us with a good preparation for Argentina."

Tite caused a surprise by recalling Barcelona's Philippe Coutinho to his squad after more than a year out, largely due to a nine-month absence with a knee injury that required three surgeries.

"It feels like it did the first time, that's how I see it every time I'm in the squad. It's an honor to wear this jersey," said

Coutinho, who has struggled for playing time this season at his club.

Brazil have dominated the single CONMEBOL World Cup qualifying group, winning ten of their 11 matches and scoring 26 goals.

Their only blemish was a 0-0 draw away to Colombia last month that brought to an end a nine-match winning run.

AFP

TODAY'S MATCHES



ECUADOR VENEZUELA



PARAGUAY CHILE



BRAZIL COLOMBIA



PERU BOLIVIA

Salah has two goals as African World Cup qualifying intensifies

Johannesburg, South Africa - Mo Salah leads Egypt against Angola this weekend with the clear objective of ending his scoring drought to help lift his nation into the final stage of Africa World Cup qualifying.

Qualifying for Qatar intensifies in the continent with the last two group rounds, with victory in Luanda moving Egypt into the next stage as Group F winners.

The two-time African Footballer of the Year wants to get back on the goal trail in Angola having failed to find the net in his last three appearances for the Merseysiders. Before his mini-

slump, Salah had scored in ten consecutive matches in all competitions for Liverpool.

Victory will take Salah and his team into the final qualifying phase to decide which five countries represent Africa in Qatar.

AFP



Mo Salah (AFP)

TODAY'S MATCHES



UGANDA KENYA



CONGO NAMIBIA



RWANDA MALI



TOGO SENEGAL



ETHIOPIA GHANA



TANZANIA DR CONGO



SOUTH AFRICA ZIMBABWE



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European 2022 World Cup qualifying fixtures

Fixtures in 2022 World Cup qualifying in the European zone this week and next (kick-offs 1945 GMT unless stated):

| THURSDAY NOVEMBER 11                                                                                   |                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GROUP A                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  AZERBAIJAN         |  LUXEMBOURG        |
|  REP. OF IRELAND    |  PORTUGAL          |
| GROUP B                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  GEORGIA            |  SWEDEN            |
|  GREECE             |  SPAIN             |
| GROUP H                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  RUSSIA             |  CYPRUS            |
|  MALTA              |  CROATIA           |
|  SLOVAKIA          |  SLOVENIA         |
| GROUP J                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  ARMENIA          |  NORTH MACEDONIA |
|  ROMANIA          |  ICELAND         |
|  GERMANY          |  LIECHTENSTEIN   |
| FRIDAY NOVEMBER 12                                                                                     |                                                                                                       |
| GROUP C                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  NORTHERN IRELAND |  LITHUANIA       |
|  ITALY            |  SWITZERLAND     |
| GROUP F                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  MOLDOVA          |  SCOTLAND        |
|  DENMARK          |  FAROE ISLANDS   |
|  AUSTRIA          |  ISRAEL          |
| GROUP I                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  ANDORRA          |  POLAND          |
|  HUNGARY          |  SAN MARINO      |
|  ENGLAND          |  ALBANIA         |
| SATURDAY NOVEMBER 13                                                                                   |                                                                                                       |
| GROUP D                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  B & H            |  FINLAND         |
|  FRANCE           |  KAZAKHSTAN      |
| GROUP E                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  WALES            |  BELARUS         |
|  BELGIUM          |  ESTONIA         |
| GROUP G                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  NORWAY           |  LATVIA          |
|  TURKEY           |  GIBRALTAR       |
|  MONTENEGRO       |  NETHERLANDS     |
| SUNDAY NOVEMBER 14                                                                                     |                                                                                                       |
| GROUP A                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  LUXEMBOURG       |  REP. OF IRELAND |
|  PORTUGAL         |  SERBIA          |
| GROUP B                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  GREECE           |  KOSOVO          |
|  SPAIN            |  SWEDEN          |
| GROUP H                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  MALTA            |  SLOVAKIA        |
|  SLOVENIA         |  CYPRUS          |
|  CROATIA          |  RUSSIA          |
| GROUP J                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  LIECHTENSTEIN    |  ROMANIA         |
|  ARMENIA          |  GERMANY         |
|  NORTH MACEDONIA  |  ICELAND         |
| MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15                                                                                    |                                                                                                       |
| GROUP C                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  NORTHERN IRELAND |  ITALY           |
|  SWITZERLAND      |  BULGARIA        |
| GROUP F                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  ISRAEL           |  FAROE ISLANDS   |
|  SCOTLAND         |  DENMARK         |
|  AUSTRIA          |  MOLDOVA         |
| GROUP I                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  SAN MARINO       |  ENGLAND         |
|  ALBANIA          |  ANDORRA         |
|  POLAND           |  HUNGARY         |
| TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16                                                                                   |                                                                                                       |
| GROUP D                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  FINLAND          |  FRANCE          |
|  B & H            |  UKRAINE         |
| GROUP E                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  WALES            |  BELGIUM         |
|  CZECH REPUBLIC   |  ESTONIA         |
| GROUP G                                                                                                |                                                                                                       |
|  GIBRALTAR        |  LATVIA          |
|  MONTENEGRO       |  TURKEY          |
|  NETHERLANDS      |  NORWAY          |

B & H is for Bosnia and Herzegovina

# AD Desert Challenge heads for big finish

4th stage win keeps Attiyah in control as Walkner gains lead in bike; Emirati rider takes charge in quads

Abu Dhabi - With four legs completed and one remaining, the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge is poised to conclude its 30th anniversary journey with a tense grand finale set for Thursday, offering starring roles to one new world champion, and another in waiting.

Fastest on the 251km Abu Dhabi Aviation stage for a fourth win in a row, Nasser al Attiyah and Mathieu Baumel stretched their overall advantage in a Toyota Hilux to an unexpected 23mins 48 secs over Argentina's Lucio Alvarez and Spain's Armand Monleon in a Toyota Hilux Overdrive.

In contrast, new FIM world champion Matthias Walkner has not won a stage so far in the rally's 30th edition, although a fourth second best bikes time on a KTM extended his lead to 3mins 49.6 secs over Australian GasGas rider Daniel Sanders.

Another stage win on the final leg could be enough to present Attiyah with the last ever drivers' crown in the FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies, before the series is upgraded to world championship rally raid status next year.

But he must avoid a repeat of his final day exit in 2017, or leave the door open for his two remaining title rivals, Alvarez, and Saudi Arabia's fourth-placed Yazeed al Rajhi who trails the Qatari by 1hr 17mins with Britain's Michael Orr in another Toyota Hilux Overdrive.

Poland's Jakub Przygonski and German co-driver Timo Gottschalk, second overnight in a Mini John Cooper Works Buggy, saw their hopes of at least a podium finish ruined by mechanical problems among the Al



Nasser al Attiyah and Mathieu Baumel in a Toyota Hilux

Dhafrah dunes, finishing in 12th.

### UAE's hope

Hopes of a UAE victory in the Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge soared as Abdulaziz Ahli swept into a massive lead in the quads category on a disastrous day for Argentina's Manuel Andujar. Another Emirati rider, Sultan al Balooshi, climbed to seventh place overall in the RallGP bikes.

"This has been another interesting day, the kind that has given the rally its reputation as one that rewards big performances, but can also be so very tough at times," said Mohammed ben Sulayem, president of the Emirates Motorsports Organization (EMSO) and FIA Vice President for Sport.

With Przygonski battling to the finish after suffering a huge

time loss, Attiyah completed the stage to say: "We are quite happy to have a lead. Tomorrow is another day and if we can win the stage it will be good to get one point extra which will help in the championship. Every day we learn something new, which is good for me and Mathieu and for the future."

Promoted one place to second, Alvarez said, "The first part

was tricky and we had some navigation problems. Then in the last 20km we lost some air in our rear tyres which slowed us down a bit. But not a bad stage in the end."

Closing the day in fifth overall, American Austin Jones and Brazilian co-driver Gustavo Gugelmin in a CAN-AM Maverick lead the FIA T4 category, while Saudi Arabia's Saleh Alsaif with Russian co-driver Egor



Matthias Walkner

## Leading positions after Stage 4 (provisional)

### Cars

1. Nasser al Attiyah/Mathieu Baumel (QAT/AND)/Toyota Hilux **15:09:08.0**
2. Lucio Alvarez / Armand Monleon (ARG/SPA)/Toyota Hilux Overdrive **15:32:56.0**
3. Denis Krotov/Konstantin Zhiltsov (RUS/RUS)/Mini John Cooper Works Buggy **16:20:44.0**

### Bikes

1. Matthias Walkner (AUT)/KTM 450 Rally Factory Replica/**115:05:20.4**
2. Daniel Sanders (AUS)/GASGAS 450 Rally Factory Replica/1 **15:09:10.0**
3. Adrien Van Beveren (FRA)/Yamaha WR450 F01 Rally/1 **15:10:06.2**

Okhotikov control T3 in another CAN-AM Maverick.

After another stirring bikes battle, Walkner finished the Abu Dhabi Aviation stage to say: "I caught Daniel (Sanders) at around 100km so we rode together and pushed. I hope I am not fastest (he needn't have worried) because I do not want to open the track tomorrow. My strategy is to do my best."

Frenchman Adrien Van Beveren beat the Austrian by 54 secs to win the stage, leaving him 4 mins 45.8secs off the lead. If anyone is brave enough to take the risks needed to wipe out such a gap on the final day, it has to be the Yamaha star, who rides with two metal plates and many screws in his shoulder and collar bone after a very nasty Dakar Rally crash last year.

# Hockey stalwart Naqvi passes away

Our Correspondent  
Muscat

Former Oman hockey coach and former India women's coach S A S Naqvi passed away at Royal Hospital in Muscat on Wednesday morning. He was 90.

Naqvi was unwell for the past couple of weeks. His son, Inayat Naqvi, a top junior hockey player in India, was with him during the past few days.

A popular and respected sports figure, Naqvi was a mentor to five Indian Olympians including Joaquim Carvalho, Merwyn Fernandes, and many other international players, besides Mir Ranjan Negi of Chak De India fame.

'He was a well-loved & respected figure in the sports field', Indian Embassy in Muscat said, while acknowledging his contribution as 'the coach of the Indian Hockey Team (Men & Women) as well as of the Oman Hockey Team'.

A recognised star player for the Western Railways - a top Indian side in the 60s, Naqvi rubbed shoulders with some of



A file photo of Former Oman hockey coach S A S Naqvi

the greatest Indian players and was close to hockey legend Dhyan Chand.

This association with the legend and love for the game,

prompted Naqvi to take a lead role in organising Dhyan Chand Hockey tournament and hockey championships on India's Republic and Independence Days.

Naqvi arrived in Oman in 1982 ahead of the sultanate's participation at the Asian Games in India's capital New Delhi. He coached Oman at the Asiad and soon after was drafted by Oman Olympic Committee in 1983 as a technical advisor.

He along with then OOC president H E Dr Hammad al Ghafri set up the OOC and for the next 18 years Naqvi played a key role in the growth of Olympic Movement in Oman.

'He worked tirelessly for the promotion of India Oman relations in the field of sports and was a true cultural ambassador of India', India's External Affairs Ministry tweeted, while condoling his death.

He played a leading role in strengthening the India-Oman sporting relations by not only facilitating top players to come and play in local competitions but also arranged visits of top teams and also get coaches to Oman.

For his role in strengthening Indo-Oman sporting ties he was awarded the prestigious Indo-Oman Friendship Award, which

was instituted by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth and the Indian Embassy in Oman.

Leading members of the Asian Hockey Federation and International Hockey Federation (FIH) praised and felicitated him for his role in hockey development.

The Sports Ministry also honoured him with lifetime achievement awards besides receiving numerous honours from various organisations in India and Oman.

The legend, who was part of Indian coaching staff in 1975 and took over as India women's team coach for the 1978 World Cup, also represented Oman at five Olympic Games and five Asian Games before retiring in 2002.

His passion for collecting memorabilia and archiving history was amazing and that led him to set up a Sports Treasure House, popularly known as Naqvisaab Museum in Ruwi.

As the news about his demise spread, tributes started pouring in from the leading sports administrators, hockey officials, clubs representatives and large Indian community based in Oman.

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## QUOTE OF THE DAY

There is the challenge of the heart... But I'll also say very proudly that it's been wonderful to be a part of Pakistan cricket.

**Matthew Hayden**  
batting consultant with Pakistan ahead of the match against his country Australia



## ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP 2021

## Finch sees 'crucial battle' with Shaheen today

Dubai, UAE - Australia skipper Aaron Finch on Wednesday said dealing with Pakistan pace ace Shaheen Shah Afridi will be key to success in the Twenty20 World Cup semi-final.

The Aussies have depended on blazing starts by swashbuckling opener David Warner and Finch to get past opponents in the Super 12 stage.

But Shaheen stands in Australia's way with his ability to pick early wickets rattling opposition teams as Pakistan moved into the semi-finals unbeaten with five wins.

"Shaheen has been in really good form for Pakistan. Yeah, so that's going to be a crucial battle no doubt," Finch told reporters ahead of the knockout tie in Dubai on Thursday.

Australia will look to master Shaheen in the key stage of the opening six overs when the pow-



Pakistan's Shaheen Shah Afridi



Australia's captain Aaron Finch

erplay is in operation with only two fielders allowed outside the inner circle.

"I think what we've seen over the course of the tournament is how important the powerplay is for batting and bowling," added the Australian captain. "I think the stats around the middle overs and the death overs are pretty similar throughout, but the powerplay definitely holds the key."

Shaheen has claimed six wick-

ets in five games after he set the tournament ablaze with his opening spell of 2-19 following his wickets of Indian openers Rohit Sharma and K L Rahul.

The tall left-arm quick has troubled Australia in four meetings with eight wickets and a best of 3-37. He dismissed both Finch and Glenn Maxwell in his first outing against the Aussies in July 2018 in a tri-series in Harare. AFP



New Zealand's Daryl Mitchell watches the ball after playing a shot during the ICC men's Twenty20 World Cup semi-final against England at the Sheikh Zayed Cricket Stadium, in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday (AFP)

# Mitchell stars as New Zealand reach T20 final

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Opener Daryl Mitchell smashed an unbeaten 72 to lead New Zealand into their first ever Twenty20 World Cup final with a thrilling five-wicket victory over England on Wednesday.

Chasing 166 for victory, New Zealand were in trouble at 13-2 and 107-4 when Jimmy Neesham turned the semi-final on its head with an 11-ball 27 to help achieve the target with one over to spare in Abu Dhabi.

With 20 needed off the final 12 balls, Mitchell smashed Chris Woakes for two sixes and a four before his 47-ball blitz triggered wild celebrations in the New Zealand dug out.

New Zealand will face either Australia or Pakistan in Sunday's final.

They suffered early blows after Woakes struck on the third ball to send Martin Guptill trudging back to the pavilion for four.

The fast bowler then got skipper Kane Williamson's prized scalp for five after the batsman attempted a scoop shot to be caught at fine-leg.

Mitchell and Devon Conway

put on 82 runs for the third wicket but Liam Livingstone struck with his leg spin to have Conway stumped for 46.

New man Neesham took the bowling head on as he smashed Chris Jordan for two sixes - one of them nearly caught at the boundary by Bairstow but his knee touched the rope - and a four to get 23 runs from the over.

He finally fell to Adil Rashid's googly with Eoin Morgan holding on to a catch at extra cover.

Earlier Moeen Ali smashed an unbeaten 51 to steer England to 166-four after being invited to bat as Kiwi skipper Williamson won an all-important toss.

England lost their openers including Jos Buttler for 29, lbw off Ish Sodhi.

### In-form Moeen

But Moeen hit back with his 37-ball knock and put on a key partnership of 63 with Dawid Malan, who hit 41, for the third wicket.

Pace bowlers Tim Southee and Trent Boult kept a tight leash in the first three overs before Buttler smashed two successive boundaries.

In-form Buttler tried to rebuild but an attempt to reverse sweep leg-spinner Sodhi got him trapped lbw for 29 off 24 deliveries.

The opener, who moved past Pakistan's Babar Azam as the leading batsman in the tournament with 269 runs, reviewed the call but replays suggested the ball would have hit his off stump.

The left-handed Malan, who was dropped on 10 by wicket-keeper Conway off Neesham, hit the first six of the innings off Southee in the 16th over but departed next ball caught behind.

But Moeen launched an attack as he hit Sodhi for a six and

then smashed Milne for two hits over the fence.

Livingstone hit 17 off 10 balls before departing and Moeen completed his first fifty of the tournament with a boundary off Neesham.

AFP

### SCOREBOARD

| ENGLAND                                                                                                                                                |                          |    |      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----|------|
| Jos Buttler                                                                                                                                            | lbw b Sodhi              | 29 | (24) |
| J Bairstow                                                                                                                                             | c Williamson b Milne     | 13 | (17) |
| David Malan                                                                                                                                            | c Conway b Southee       | 41 | (30) |
| Moeen Ali                                                                                                                                              | not out                  | 51 | (37) |
| L Livingstone                                                                                                                                          | c Santner b Neesham      | 17 | (10) |
| Eoin Morgan                                                                                                                                            | not out                  | 4  | (2)  |
| <b>Extras:</b>                                                                                                                                         | (lb 2, w 9)              | 11 |      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                                                                                                                           | 166/4 in 20 overs        |    |      |
| <b>Fall of wickets:</b> 1-37, 2-53, 3-116, 4-156                                                                                                       |                          |    |      |
| <b>Bowling:</b> T Southee 4-0-24-1, T Boult 4-0-40-0, A Milne 4-0-31-1, Ish Sodhi 4-0-32-1, M Santner 1-0-8-0, J Neesham 2-0-18-1, G Phillips 1-0-11-0 |                          |    |      |
| NEW ZEALAND                                                                                                                                            |                          |    |      |
| Martin Guptill                                                                                                                                         | c Ali b Woakes           | 4  | (1)  |
| Daryl Mitchell                                                                                                                                         | not out                  | 73 | (48) |
| K Williamson                                                                                                                                           | c Rashid b Woakes        | 5  | (11) |
| D Conway                                                                                                                                               | st Buttler b Livingstone | 46 | (38) |
| G Phillips                                                                                                                                             | c Billings b Livingstone | 2  | (4)  |
| J Neesham                                                                                                                                              | c Morgan b Rashid        | 26 | (10) |
| M Santner                                                                                                                                              | not out                  | 1  | (1)  |
| <b>Extras:</b>                                                                                                                                         | (b 1, lb 4, nb 1, w 4)   | 10 |      |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                                                                                                                                          | 167/5 in 19 overs        |    |      |
| <b>Fall of wickets:</b> 1-4, 2-13, 3-95, 4-107, 5-147                                                                                                  |                          |    |      |
| <b>Bowling:</b> C Woakes 4-1-36-2, C Jordan 3-0-31-0, A Rashid 4-0-39-1, M Wood 4-0-34-0, L Livingstone 4-0-22-2                                       |                          |    |      |

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