

Oman, Tanzania to boost trade

President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania, met with some businessmen from both countries on the sidelines of the Oman-Tanzania Business Forum. The forum explored means of enhancing economic and investment cooperation, as well as boosting trade exchange. **DETAILS ON P3**



HIS MAJESTY, TANZANIAN PRESIDENT HOLD BILATERAL MEETING



MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania held a bilateral meeting at the Al Alam Palace on Monday morning.

During the meeting, the two leaders completed discussions on bilateral relations between the two countries and ways to promote them in various spheres to serve the common interests

of their peoples. They also reviewed a number of matters of interest to both sides. The meeting was attended from the Omani side by Sayyid Badr bin Hamad

al Busaidy, Foreign Minister and Dr Hamad bin Said al Aufi, Head of the Private Office, while from the Tanzanian side it was also attended by Ambassador Mbarouk Nassoro Mbarouk, Deputy

Minister of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation and Sospeter Matwali, Private Secretary of the Tanzanian President. — **ONA**

SEE ALSO P2&3

Oman and Tanzania sign 6 MoUs, investment fund established



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman and the United Republic of Tanzania signed at Al Bustan Palace Hotel here on Monday several memoranda of understanding (MoUs) in the presence of President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The MoUs cover fields of energy, tourism, natural resources, higher education, training and national museums.

A trilateral MoU was also signed between Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), Tanzanian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (TCCIA) and Zanzibar National Chamber of Commerce

OMAN, TANZANIA SIGN 6 MOUS TO BOLSTER TRADE

INVESTMENT FUND WILL INVEST IN PROJECTS OF VALUE

MORE MOUS IN INVESTMENT, ENERGY AND TOURISM

(ZNCC). A memorandum was also signed between Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and Zanzibar Investment Promotion Authority (ZIPA).

MoUs were also signed between Oman Airports Management Company and Kilimanjaro International Airport, and between Oman Society for Petroleum Services (Opal) and the Association of Tanzania Oil and Gas Service Providers (ATOOGS), and between Al Bashayer Meat Company and the National Company for Live Animals and between Oman Food Investment Holding Company (OFIC) and the Tanzanian Horticultural Association.



HM, Tanzanian President hold talks



Oman and Tanzania sign 6 MoUs



FROM PAGE1
Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister, told Oman News Agency that an investment fund between the Sultanate of Oman and the United Republic of Tanzania was established. The fund will invest in projects of value to the two countries in various fields, including agriculture, fishing and mining.
Sayyid Badr forecasts trade exchange between the two countries will increase,

especially after Oman and Tanzania signed today several memoranda of understanding, in addition to existing agreements between Oman Investment Authority (OIA) and the Tanzanian authority concerned.
He added that the two countries will later on sign MoUs in various economic, investment, energy and tourism fields with a work programme set for those agreements. The signing ceremony was attended by some Omani and Tanzanian officials. — ONA



Oman-Tanzania forum explores opportunities



President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania



Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef,
Minister of Commerce, Industry and
Investment Promotion



Ridha bin Juma al Saleh,
Chairman of OCCI

MUSCAT: President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania met business people from both countries on the sidelines of the Oman-Tanzania Business Forum in Muscat on Monday. The forum, organised by Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), was held at Al Bustan Palace Hotel. It explored means of enhancing economic and investment cooperation, as well as boosting trade exchange. In her statement to the forum, President Samia expressed her thanks to the government of Oman for supporting Tanzania throughout the last decades.

The Tanzanian President reaffirmed the keenness of the two countries in enhancing economic relations based on the historic and deep-rooted relations between Oman and Tanzania. The President of Tanzania added that the social connections contributed to bolstering relations between the two countries, describing Oman as a “distinguished” country.

Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef,



Oman-Tanzania Business Forum in Muscat on Monday.

Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, welcomed the Tanzanian President. He said that the forum is an opportunity to boost the economic relations between Oman and Tanzania. Al Yousef added that he hopes the Tanzanian side would benefit from investment opportunities in Oman, particularly

in the fields of industry, agriculture, fisheries, mining, tourism and renewable energy.

Eng Ridha bin Juma al Saleh, Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), said that the competitive business milieu stimulates growth and economic diversification. He added that the Sultanate of Oman

offers many investment incentives, namely legal transparency in the business environment and full ownership of investments. Presentations were given during the forum highlighting the investment milieu, incentives and procedures pertaining to businesses and investments in the two countries.

President tours National Museum



MUSCAT: President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania visited the National Museum today within the framework of her official visit to the Sultanate of Oman. The guest was greeted upon her arrival at the museum by Jamal bin Hassan al Mosawi, Secretary-General of the National Museum.

The Tanzanian President toured various sections of the museum during which she was briefed on contents of the museum's halls that highlight crucial images of Oman's history and civilisation. The guest also visited the halls of the museum, namely the Hall of the Earth and Man, the Hall of Maritime History, the Hall of Pre-History and Antiquity, the Hall



of Greatness of Islam, the Hall of Oman and the World, and the corner of late Sultan Qaboos (the Dearest and Finest of Men) in the Renaissance Hall. The Tanzanian President was also briefed on some artefacts related to the history of Oman and East African countries, including the piece gifted by the

late Tanzanian President Dr John Pomfrey Joseph Magufuli, to the late Sultan Qaboos.

The President was accompanied during the visit by Dr Rahma bint Ibrahim al Mahrouqiyah, Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation (Head of the Mission of Honour). — ONA

President Samia visits Dar Al Hanan

MUSCAT: President Samia Suluhu Hassan of the United Republic of Tanzania visited Dar Al Hanan of Oman Cancer Association (OCA) in the Wilayat of Bausher on Monday. The Tanzanian President toured various sections of Dar Al Hanan during which she was briefed on objectives and roles of Dar Al Hanan. She was also briefed on facilities and services rendered to children with cancer, whether at the Royal Hospital or Sultan Qaboos University Hospital or Khoula Hospital.

Dr Waheed bin Ali al Kharousi, Chairman of Dar Al Hanan's Board of Directors, gave a presentation to the Tanzanian President. The presentation introduced the OCA and Dar Al Hanan project. He also spoke about the association's objectives, work mechanisms and services rendered to patients.

Dar Al Hanan provides accommodation and food for children with cancer and their families, as well as providing transport services to the hospital during their treatment and ensuring that the patients stick to their treatment programme. — ONA





Royal Office Minister receives Ambassadors

MUSCAT: Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office, received Imelda Panolong, Ambassador of the Philippines to the Sultanate of Oman; Kiejoo Kim, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Sultanate of Oman; and Jota Yamamoto, Ambassador of Japan to the Sultanate of Oman, in Muscat on Monday.

Gen Al Numani and Ambassador Panolong reviewed fields of the joint cooperation and ways of promoting the relations between Oman and the Philippines. The ambassador expressed thanks and appreciation of the Republic of the Philippines to the Sultanate of Oman for the successful efforts in releasing the detained Filipino citizen. The ambassador aspires to strengthen the relations

of cooperation between the two countries towards broader horizons.

Ambassador Kim commended the strength of the bilateral relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Korea in his meeting with Gen Al Numani . The ambassador also expressed his thanks and appreciation for Oman's efforts in the regional and international issues. They touched on a range of common issues and discussed ways of enhancing them to serve aspirations of the two countries.

Gen Al Numani and Ambassador Yamamoto reviewed the march of relations and fields of cooperation between Oman and Japan and ways of enhancing them. They also touched on a range of matters of joint interests. — ONA

Officials review preparedness to receive khareef tourists



MUSCAT: The Municipal Council of Dhofar Governorate, on Monday, discussed the readiness of the concerned authorities to receive visitors to the governorate during the autumn tourist season in 2022. The meeting, which was chaired by Mohammed bin Saeed Kashoub, Vice-President of the Municipal Council, reviewed the programmes and plans of the Dhofar Municipality for the autumn season, as well as the preparations of the concerned authorities in the governorate for the tourist season.

The Council was also briefed on the visual presentation submitted by the competent authorities in the General Directorate of Social

Development in the Governorate of Dhofar to activate the social development committees and the relief and shelter sector under the management of the National Centre for Emergency Management to deal with climatic conditions.

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has announced its readiness for khareef in Dhofar on Sunday.

The Directorate-General of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in Dhofar held a meeting with several government and private sector institutions to review the ministry's efforts.

Retracing history through a ride

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
@lakshmioman

A young boy accompanied his parents to stay in Zanzibar for forty days in 1994. And the country was back in his mind as he ventured out to biking around the world in 2009, but it was not until 2018 he reached the land he had visited as a child, a place full of links to his family as well as his nation.

“We still have relatives who live there. And my objective was to trace back to the areas Omanis lived and historical past which is still visible in the architecture, in clothes and cap,” Maher al Barwani said.

Embarking on the journey he had to pass through many countries — from the Sultanate of Oman to United Arab Emirates to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Once in Africa he started from Sudan, and passed through Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and then



United Republic of Tanzania. He spent 10 months living and exploring Tanzania while in the process he became Tourism Ambassador of Tanzania.

“I have seen more than 80 per cent of Tanzania. I am very grateful to the Ministry of Tourism because it gave me the opportunity to explore Tanzania. It was fascinating because our history is still there. And we still have relatives living there.

There are more than one palace built by the sultans

during their era, so not just in Stone Town,” Maher noted.

Marhubi Palace (5 km away from Bait Al Ajaib) is looked upon as the home of Omani Sultan in late 1800s on the Zanzibar islands. Pemba also has palace. Bait Al Ajaib — the House of Wonders — was called so because it was not only the tallest building at the time, but also because it was the first to have electricity and an elevator. Today however, there are fewer people wearing Omani

dishdashas because it is not available as much as attire from other countries.

“I hope we can revive the Omani dishdashas for the Omanis who are in Tanzania,” Maher pointed out.

As Maher continued to explore Tanzania, he also had the opportunity to attend a cultural festival at the capital. He recollected, “I had the opportunity to meet Samia Suluhu Hassan who was the vice-president then. I explained to her my journey on my bike all the way from Oman. I am excited to see her now visiting the Sultanate of Oman as the President of the United Republic of Tanzania.”

“I never felt like a guest when I was in Tanzania not because I speak Swahili but because I see how all are treated. The hospitality is great no matter which country a person is from. And the food too it is what we eat at home as well,” said Maher al Barwani.

In brief

MUSCAT

ACTING RAFO CHIEF RECEIVES SENIOR OFFICIAL

Air Commodore Zahrn bin Nasser Ambosaidi, acting Commander of the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO), received Air Vice Marshal Said bin Ali al Zahrani, Commander of the Air Operations Centre and Unified Air Defence at the Unified Military Command, in Muscat on Monday. They exchanged cordial conversations and discussed several matters of mutual interest.

COAST GUARD RESCUES 8 FISHERMEN

The Coast Guard Police in Musandam and Dhofar governorates rescued eight fishermen after two fishing boats experienced engine failure at the sea. The two boats were towed by the Coast Guard vessels to the shore and the fishermen are in good health.



Recall Campaign



Date of Campaign : 14/06/2022
Campaign Type : Recall Campaign
Product Description : Lexus NX models

Production Period	Brand	Vehicle Model	Affected VIN Range	No. of Affected Vehicles
March 31, 2021 through January 31, 2022	LEXUS	NX	JTJCGDEZ0N2002024 to JTJCKDEZ0N2002143	23

Note : Not all vehicles in these VIN ranges are affected and/or sold in Oman.

Description:
The subject vehicles are manufactured with body panels that are spot-welded to the left and right front shock absorber mounting areas. During the spot-welding of these panels, there is a possibility that certain spot-welds were missed. In this condition, cracks and breakage may occur on other spot-welds and/or on the body panels around the front shock absorber mounting areas. Under longer-term (time and mileage) use, this could eventually cause a front shock absorber to separate from the mounting area, resulting in a loss of vehicle driving stability, increasing the risk of crash.

Procedure:
As per "Technical instruction" advised by TMC.

For More Information:
Customers driving these vehicles may please contact M/s. Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC for further details / booking appointment etc from 14/06/2022.

Contact Details:
Toll free No. 80073000 on all working days between 08:30 to 17:30 hrs after 14/06/2022



Oman Trading Establishment LLC



Sultanate of Oman
Consumer Protection Authority

RECALL CAMPAIGN
For GENESIS G80



Date of Campaign : 14 / 6 / 2022

Campaign Type : Recall

Recall Segment : Electrical

Product Description : GENESIS G80

Model Year	Division	Vehicle Model	Affected Vehicle VIN Range	No. of Affected Vehicles in Oman
2015-2016	GENESIS	DH	KMHGN4110HU161110 to KMTFN4JFXLU339191	178

Description:

An electrical short in the HECU module may occur very rarely. It could increase the risk of an engine compartment fire.

Procedure:

Replace the fuse and attach the label.

For More information:

Customers of affected vehicles may please call Oman Trading Establishment for further details/booking Appointment etc from Date - 14.6.2022

Contact Details:

Toll free No 80050003 on all working days between 8:00 am to 1:00 pm & 2:00 pm to 5:30 pm with effected from date 14.6.2022



شركة الصلان للصناعات الغذائية ش.م.ع.م
Al Sallan Food Industries Co. SAOC

ص.ب. ٩٧٠ صحر - الرمز البريدي: ٣١١ سلطنة عمان - تلفون: ٢٢٣٠٢٦٧٠ - فاكس: ٢٦٧٠٠٩٤٠

Invitation for attending Annual General Meeting

The Board of Directors of Al Sallan Food Industries Co. SAOC have pleasure in inviting the shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting& Extraordinary General Meeting which will be held online (MCD site) 3:00 PM on 27th of June 2022 in case of Quorum is not completed, next meeting will be held on 29th of June 2022 3 PM. to discuss the following agenda:

First: Annual General Meeting:

- To consider and approve the report of the Board of Directors for the financial year ended March 31, 2022.
- To consider and approve the Auditors' report, Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Account for the financial year ended March 31, 2022.
- To inform the related party transactions carried out during the financial year ended March.31, 2022 as per Annexure 1.
- To consider and approve related party transactions for the year ended March 31, 2023 as per Annexure 1.
- To appoint Auditors of the Company for the year 2022-23 and to fix their remuneration.

Second: Extraordinary General Meeting:

- To discuss the financial position of the Company as required as per Article 147 Commercial Companies Law.

A shareholder is entitled to appoint a proxy in writing to attend and vote on his behalf.

All the reports, documents and statements relating to the general meeting are available for the shareholders inspection during working hours at the company's principal place of business in Sohar. For any clarification regarding the matters mentioned in the above agenda, please contact Mr. Ismail Roushdhi on Ph. 26750623.

Vice Chairman

Legal Advisor

Auditors



Donating blood is an act of solidarity

ZAINAB AL NASSRI
@zainabnassri

The Department of Blood Banks Services (DBBS) of the Ministry of Health collected 70,555 blood units in 2021. The blood units were collected by blood banks affiliated with the MoH. Among the donors, non-Omanis accounted for 93 per cent, Omanis 82 per cent and first-time donors 40 per cent.

As the world observes June 14, World Blood Donor Day, the role of blood donors becomes vital in saving several lives globally and serving the patients who suffer from life-threatening conditions.

Due to the voluntary blood donor, many serious patients become normal and start enjoying a better quality of life.

Donated blood units help support complex medical and surgical operations and play an essential role in saving the lives of many mothers and newly born children. They are hugely helpful in saving human lives during an emergency and even man-made or natural disasters.

This year's slogan 'Donating blood is an act of solidarity. Join the effort and save lives' is meant to draw attention and raise awareness for blood donation to save lives and strengthen solidarity within society.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the specific objectives of this year's campaign are to thank blood donors, work

WORLD BLOOD DONOR DAY



The Department of Blood Banks Services (DBBS) collected 70,555 blood units in 2021.

to raise awareness widely for blood donation regularly without remuneration, highlight the need for a year-round commitment to donate blood to maintain adequate supplies and to achieve timely and safe blood transfusion for all.

The idea is to recognise and promote the value of voluntary blood donation in strengthening community solidarity and social cohesion, raise awareness for increased investment by the governments to build a sustainable and resilient national blood supply system, and to increase the collection of blood donations from free blood donors.

The WHO also mentioned that there are certain activities that countries are implementing in this year's campaign, like publishing stories in various media about people who survived due to blood donations. This is to motivate donors to continue donating blood regularly and motivate others to do the same.

Other activities include celebrations to recognise donors, campaigns on social media, special broadcasts, media posts depicting individual blood donors along with the logo, meetings and workshops, music events, celebrating solidarity, and painting famous landmarks in red.

Through Italian Eyes concludes

LIJU CHERIAN
@lijuchermanoman

'Through Italian Eyes,' a multifaceted art exhibition organised by a well-known couple of Italian artists resident in Oman, Dr Lucia Oliva and Dr Luca Moretti, together with Dr Alessandra Giorda, owner of TV2 Art Gallery, concluded recently.

The exhibition was held at the Crowne Plaza OCEC and was an original art event, which offered a versatile panorama of some Italian artists, each one of them representing a different style, together with the artworks of Lucia.

Shaikh Mahmood bin Harith al Nabhani was the guest of honour at the opening and closing ceremonies.

Dr Lucia, who conceived this unusual art occasion, is well appreciated in the Sultanate of Oman and other Gulf countries.

She and Luca and Alessandra, an Italian opera and art journalist, aim to offer Muscat art lovers an unusual cross-section of contemporary Italian art, hosting artworks of about four artists.

Alina Ciuciu, Fabio Cuffari, Gabriele D'Aloisio and Enrico Tubertini are the four Italian artists who took part with their exhibits and are represented world-wide by the esteemed Giorda, star journalist in the field of Opera, who was recently back from Muscat on the occasion of Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM) re-opening for the premiere of Rigoletto last January.



Both the opening as well as the informal closing evening offered guests an original show of historical dance performances, as usual, interpreted by Luca and Lucia with their theatrical and classy virtuosity.

Alina is a gifted artist who demonstrates a mastery of painting in a wide range of styles and unusual, extraordinary topics. Her paintings show a variety of influences, which vary from day-to-day and uses only a 'palette knife', and textures with acrylic 'impasto', which creates an amazing three-dimensional effect.

Fabio says music allowed him to have incredible experiences like visiting all of Italy and getting to know many people, and acquiring a new awareness of himself.

In 2016, he got to learn the pastel painting technique. "I got passionate, and started studying this technique deeply, desiring to specialise it. I crossed the borders

of my region, carrying around my teaching methods, presided over by my motto 'you can learn talent'.

Gabriele is a modern self-taught entrepreneur devoted to art. In the scenario of the mountains between hills and countryside, armed with stuccos, spatulas, acrylics, oils and brushes, he confronts a world of infinite stimuli that he reproduces on different materials, where nothing is left to chance and where often the intertwining of materials redistributes order in the chaos of events.

Lucia is an eco-sustainable lifestyle promoter who says, 'Where normal life of an object gets to an end, art begins.' Her unique concept involves mirrors and other accessories to create original scenic set-ups combining sculpture, painting, installation and theatre: artworks that consist in a tangible side and an ethereal one, body and soul of the same entity.

WHO orientation meet kicks off

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

An orientation meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) Collaborating Centres (WHO-CC) in Oman kicked off under the auspices of Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Saeedi, Minister of Health, in the presence of directors of WHO collaborating centres in the region in Muscat on Monday.

The meeting is hosted by the Sultanate of Oman and organised by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Office.

The meeting aimed to discuss different opportunities available in establishing WHO-CC in Oman, and discuss success stories with best practices.

Furthermore, the meeting aimed to orient participating institutions towards WHO-



Dr Ahmed bin Mohammed al Saeedi, Minister of Health

CC roles and eligibility for designation, review updated rules and policies regulating (re) designation of WHO-CC and streamlining their work with WHO's work programme.

In his opening remarks, the Minister of Health stated: "Through this collaboration, Oman's collaborating centres will get access to worldwide

experience to build capacity and support the work they do; while gaining international visibility and access to work alongside other collaborating centres across the world in areas such as sharing objectives, exchanging information, pooling, and many others."

Dr Al Saeedi pointed to the already established two WHO collaborating centres in Oman. One is Oman's Central Public Health Laboratories (CPHL), and the other for Quality and Patient Safety; both of which have proven to be great assets and worked directly with EMRO to develop tools and build the necessary capacity.

The meeting highlighted the roles of WHO-CC in light of EMR Vision 2023, the WHO-CC policies and procedures, and the WHO-CC experience in Oman.

Training workshop on travel medicine

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

The Directorate-General of Health Services of Muscat Governorate (DGHS-Muscat), represented by the Primary Health Care Department and in collaboration with the Directorate-General of Primary Health Care and the Directorate-General for Disease Surveillance and Control (DGDSC) at the Ministry of Health, organised a training workshop in Muscat on Monday on introducing travel medicine service in primary health care at the Directorate building in Darsait.

Dr Saif bin Salim al Abri, DGDSC Director-General; Dr Thamra bint Said al Ghafriyah, DGHS-Muscat Director-General; and senior officials in the Directorate attended the workshop.

The workshop targeted doctors and nurses working in the field of primary health care and service providers in the health institutions affiliated to the Directorate. It also aimed to train the health workers on the principles and priorities of travel medicine and introducing the role that the Directorate will play in providing health services



to the traveller.

Furthermore, the training workshop comes to introduce the necessity of introducing and activating the travel medicine clinic in the primary health care institutions because of their positive effects on the health of the traveller, as well as protecting the members of the community from infectious and other diseases. The situation requires the introduction of this service to keep pace with the global health development in the field of primary health care.

Dr Huda bint Anwar al Lawatiyah, Director of Primary Health Care in the Directorate, indicated that the travel medicine clinic is a regulatory mechanism for the traveller, which is concerned with his/her health, as it is considered a branch of preventive medicine.



The traveller is advised to visit the clinic approximately 6 to 8 weeks before his/her travel to receive the required care regarding travel and sickness, take the required immunisations as necessary, and follow the essential preventive and health measures. Upon return from travel, it is preferable to visit the clinic in case of any health symptoms.

The workshop included lectures delivered by lecturers specialised in travel medicine from various health institutions related to this field, focusing on the importance of the availability of a travel medicine clinic.

The workshop also addressed travel medicine health issues related to morbidity and traveller, such as immunisations and the procedures followed in entry requirements to other countries.

Recall Campaign



Date of Campaign : 14/06/2022
Campaign Type : Recall Campaign
Product Description : Forklift trucks of 4FD100/200 models

Production Period	Brand	Vehicle Model	Frame # Ranges	No. of Affected Vehicles
Sep 22,2004 through June22,2020	TOYOTA Forklift trucks	4FD100-115	10134-10521	9
		4FDK150-160	10167-10248	
		4FD200-240	10030-10041 50076-50125	

Note : Not all vehicles in these frame # ranges are involved and/or sold in Oman.

Description:
There are cases that the oil filter mounted on the torque convertor is improperly selected for the power transmission device. There is a possibility that vibration from the vehicle may damage the screw for mounting the oil filter element and lead to oil leakage.

Procedure:
Replacement of oil filter with the improved one as per "Technical instruction" advised by Toyota Industries Corporation.

For More Information:
Customers driving these Forklift may please contact M/s. Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC for further details / booking appointment etc from 14/06/2022

Contact Details:
Toll free No. 80073000 on all working days between 08:30 to 17:30 hrs after 14/06/2022.

C.R. 1703412



Darfur clashes kill over 100: Tribal leader

KHARTOUM: The latest clashes in Sudan's Darfur region between Arab and non-Arab groups have left more than 100 people killed, a tribal leader said on Monday.

Repeated clashes in the region since late last year have now left several hundred people dead as Sudan grapples with the fallout from a coup in October led by army chief Abdel Fattah al Burhan.

"The fighting killed 117 people and left 14 villages burnt," said Ibrahim Hashem, a leader in the ethnic African Gimir tribe.

Hashem said the deaths were largely among the Gimir tribe during clashes with the Arab Rizeigat tribe.

It was not immediately clear how many were killed among the Arab tribe.

The fighting broke out last week

The cycle of violence in Darfur is unacceptable and highlights root causes that must be addressed

VOLKER PERTHES
UN Special Rep to Sudan

following a land dispute between two people, one from the Rizeigat and another from the Gimir.

It took place near Kolbus, about 160 kilometres from the state capital El Geneina.

Hashem said "many people" from his tribe have gone missing since the violence broke out and



which was continuing on Monday.

West Darfur state, the arid region of Sudan bordering Chad, has been gripped in recent months by the deadly bouts of violence.

In April, more than 200 people were killed in clashes between Arab and non-Arab groups in West Darfur.

On Monday, UN special

representative Volker Perthes said he was "appalled" by the violence in Kolbus.

"The cycle of violence in Darfur is unacceptable and highlights root causes that must be addressed," he said on Twitter. The Darfur region was the scene of a civil war during the three-decade rule of president Omar al Bashir.

He armed some Arab groups — known as Janjaweed — to fight ethnic minority rebels demanding an end to marginalisation by his Arab-dominated regime.

The scorched-earth campaign left 300,000 people dead and displaced 2.5 million, according to the United Nations. While key rebel groups signed a 2020 peace deal, deadly clashes still erupt over land, livestock, access to water and grazing. — **AFP**

Algeria press tycoon jailed

ALGIERS: The head of top Algerian media group Ennahar, Anis Rahmani, was sentenced to 10 years in jail on Monday for corruption.

Rahmani, whose real name is Mohamed Mokaddem, had been on trial for "misusing funds", "violation of foreign exchange regulations", "trading in influence to obtain undue advantages" and "making a false declaration", according to the official APS news agency.

El Athir Presse, part of Ennahar, was also fined around \$286,000.

Rahmani, 50, is already serving a three-year sentence confirmed by an appeals court in March 2021 for recording and broadcasting a telephone conversation with a senior intelligence officer.

Algerian sentences are not accumulated, meaning only the longest is actually served.

Rahmani has been in detention since February 2020, and was also sentenced in October that year to six months in prison for defamation in a separate case, concerning the Arabic-language magazine Echourouk al Arabi.

Rahmani's case follows a string of convictions against figures close to long-serving president Abdelaziz Bouteflika, who quit office in April 2019 amid mass demonstrations and pressure from the army.

Launched in 2012, news channel Ennahar TV was seen as a weapon against Bouteflika's opponents. — **AFP**

Judge quits Tunisia electoral board to support strike

TUNIS: A judge serving on Tunisia's electoral board resigned on Monday in solidarity with a court strike after President Kais Saied (pictured) sacked dozens of his colleagues.

Habib Rebii, appointed by Saied to the ISIE electoral board on May 9, announced his resignation on Facebook.

"I have handed in my resignation from ISIE in support of my fellow judges and to demand a basic judicial law that meets international standards," he wrote.

Saied, who dissolved parliament following a power grab last July, had issued a decree extending his control over the judiciary in early June, as well as sacking 57 judges he accused of corruption.

That prompted a nationwide judges' strike against his "continued interference in the judiciary", which entered its second week on Monday.

Rebii's departure comes six weeks ahead of a referendum on a revised constitution, the centrepiece of Saied's programme for overhauling Tunisia's political system — the only democracy to emerge from the 2011 Arab uprisings.

Rebii had been appointed

after Saied on April 22 gave himself powers to pick members of the formerly independent ISIE electoral board, which will oversee both Saied's July 25 referendum and elections on December 17. Critics have accused Saied of dragging Tunisia back towards autocracy, 11 years since the fall of dictator Zine El Abidine Ben Ali.

Meanwhile, a Tunisian military court has placed a journalist in custody after he made comments about the army during a television broadcast, his lawyer said.

The military prosecutor's office opened an investigation after Salah Attia, who works for a local daily, made the remarks to Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera on Friday, his lawyer Samir Ben Amor said.

Attia said Tunisian President Kais Saied had "officially asked the military to intervene against the Tunisian General Labour Union" — a powerful body known as the UGTT — and to surround its offices ahead of a general strike called for June 16. Attia, who opposes a power grab by Saied that began in July last year, said the army told the UGTT it had refused the president's request. — **AFP**



ASH BLANKETS TOWN



A bird's eye view of Bulusan volcano spewing ash as seen from Irosin town, Sorsogon province, south of Manila. — **AFP**

Scale-backs on N-commitments 'reversible'

TEHRAN: Iran said on Monday that all measures it has taken to roll back on its commitments under the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers are "reversible".

"If the agreement is finalised in Vienna tomorrow, all the measures carried out by Iran are technically reversible," Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh told reporters.

Iran on Wednesday said it had disconnected some UN nuclear watchdog cameras monitoring its nuclear site.

The move came as a resolution was adopted by the International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors censuring the Islamic republic for its lack of cooperation.

IAEA chief Rafael Grossi said on Thursday his agency had been informed that 27 cameras were



Saeed Khatibzadeh, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman

being removed, leaving about 40 still in place.

He warned that the move could deal a "fatal blow" to negotiations to revive the 2015 nuclear accord, stalled since March.

Iran meanwhile says the disconnected cameras were not part of a safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

Iran "is fully honouring its commitments under the safeguards agreement", Khatibzadeh said, adding that the country has only "stopped some of the voluntary measures".

"All of the safeguard cameras of the Islamic Republic of Iran are in place; all of the measures it has been undertaking under the supervision of the IAEA are in place," he added. The talks in the Austrian capital, which began in April last year, aim to return the US to the nuclear deal, including through the lifting of sanctions on Iran, and to ensure Tehran's full compliance with its commitments under the agreement.

The deal known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) gave Iran sanctions relief in exchange for curbs on its nuclear programme

to guarantee that it could not develop a nuclear weapon — something Tehran has always denied wanting to do.

But the US unilaterally withdrew from the accord in 2018 and reimposed severe economic sanctions, prompting Iran to begin rolling back on its own commitments.

Khatibzadeh said the on-off dialogue in Vienna can yield results if the US "puts aside the delusion of using leverage" and "accepts to fully meet its commitments under the JCPOA and UN resolution 2231" which supports it.

"What we are focusing on is that this agreement becomes operational and is signed, and this is possible if the US changes its approach and manner," he added. — **AFP**

BAGHDAD

Sandstorm brings Iraq to standstill

Iraq temporarily closed Baghdad airport on Monday as choking clouds of dust blanketed the capital, the latest crippling sandstorm in a country that has warned climate change poses an "existential threat".

It was the tenth duststorm since mid-April to hit Iraq, which has been battered by intense droughts, soil degradation, high temperatures and low rainfall linked to climate change.

Earlier this month, to mark World Environment Day, Presi-



dent Barham Saleh warned that tackling climate change "must become a national priority for Iraq as it is an existential threat to the future of our generations to come". — **AFP**

BEIJING

Beijing tightens Covid restrictions

Beijing started a new round of mass testing in its most populous downtown district after a rapidly spreading outbreak linked to a bar saw Covid rules tightened again in the capital. China is the last major economy still committed to a zero-Covid strategy, stamping out new cases with a combination of targeted lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines.

But that strategy is being stretched to the limit by the fast-



spreading Omicron variant, as both Beijing and Shanghai have seen fresh clusters just days after lifting restrictions such as lockdowns, restaurant and office closures. — **AFP**

SEOUL

North Korea fires suspected artillery: Seoul

North Korea fired a series of artillery shots over the weekend, Seoul's military said, days after leader Kim Jong Un vowed to use "power for power" to defend the country's sovereignty. The South Korean military detected "several flight trajectories" that are understood to be shots from North Korean artillery, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. The suspected shots were fired between 8:07 am to 11:03 am on Sunday morning, the JCS said, stressing Seoul maintains a firm military readiness



in collaboration with treaty ally United States. Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency has not released information on Sunday's shots, nor on other recent missile launches. — **AFP**



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In brief

■ LONDON



BRITISH OPPN LEADER PROBED FOR ETHICS VIOLATIONS

Keir Starmer, the leader of Britain's centre-left opposition Labour Party, is under investigation by the parliamentary commissioner for standards for potential breaches of rules on earnings and gifts. The parliamentary website showed that Kathryn Stone is looking at whether Starmer broke two sections of the members of Parliament code of conduct on registering interests.

A Labour source told the PA news agency that the investigation centres on a number of slightly late declarations, as Starmer insisted he is confident he has not broken the rules. — **dpa**

■ ATALAIA DO NORTE



HUMAN REMAINS FOUND IN SEARCH FOR AMAZON MISSING

Human remains have been found in the search for British journalist Dom Phillips and Brazilian indigenous expert Bruno Pereira, who disappeared in the Amazon after receiving threats, Brazil's president said. "The evidence leads us to believe something bad was done to them, because human innards were found floating in the river, which are now undergoing DNA testing", President Bolsonaro said.

Phillips's niece Dominique Davies said via text message that "two bodies have been found" in the search, and that relatives were awaiting confirmation from federal police as to whether they are the missing. — **AFP**

■ GENEVA



UN RIGHTS CHIEF NOT TO SEEK SECOND TERM

UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet said she will not seek a second term, ending months of speculation, insisting she wanted to spend more time with her family in Chile. The surprise announcement came as the 70-year-old former Chilean president opened the United Nations Human Rights Council's 50th session. "As my term as High Commissioner draws to a close, this Council's milestone 50th session will be the last which I brief", Bachelet told the diplomats gathered in Geneva. Speculation has been rife for months, with diplomats in Geneva in recent weeks that she had yet to provide clues to her plans. — **AFP**

Ukraine 'pushed back' from key city

KRAMATORSK: Ukraine said on Monday its forces had been pushed back from the centre of key industrial city Severodonetsk, where President Volodymyr Zelensky described a fight for "literally every metre".

The cities of Severodonetsk and Lysychansk, which are separated by a river, have been targeted for weeks as the last areas still under Ukrainian control in the eastern Lugansk region.

Regional governor Sergiy Gaiday said on Monday Russian forces were "gathering more and more equipment" to "encircle" Severodonetsk.

Moscow's troops had "pushed our units from the centre and continue to destroy our city", he said.

The local Azot chemical plant, where hundreds of civilians have reportedly taken refuge, was being "heavily shelled", Gaiday added.

Severodonetsk has been "de facto" blocked off after Russian forces blew up the "last" bridge connecting it to Lysychansk on Sunday, Eduard Basurin, a representative for pro-Russian separatists, said on Monday.

Ukrainian forces in the area have two choices, he said, "to surrender or die". Moscow-backed forces were also carrying out an offensive on the key city of Sloviansk, from "west, north and east", Basurin said.

The capture of Severodonetsk would open the road for Moscow to Sloviansk and another major city, Kramatorsk, in their push to



A totally destroyed house is pictured after shelling in the city of Lysychansk in the eastern Ukrainian region of Donbas amid Russian attack on Ukraine. — **AFP**

conquer the whole of Donbas, a mainly Russian-speaking region partly held by pro-Kremlin separatists since 2014.

Ukrainian forces were fighting for "every town and village where the occupiers came", Zelensky said in a message to mark the eighth anniversary of the liberation of Mariupol in the 2014 conflict.

The port city in southern Ukraine was captured by Russian troops in May after a weeks-long

Presidential adviser says Kyiv needed more arms deliveries to stop the conflict

siege. "We are once again fighting for it and all of Ukraine", Zelensky said. Presidential advisor Mikhaylo Podolyak said on Monday Kyiv needed more arms deliveries to stop the conflict. "Being straightforward — to end the war

we need heavy weapons", he said on Twitter.

He listed items he said the Ukrainian army required, including hundreds of howitzers, tanks and armoured vehicles.

Currently, Russia's massed artillery in the area of Severodonetsk gave it a ten-fold advantage, the commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian military, Valeriy Zaluzhny, said Sunday. "Every metre of Ukrainian land

there is covered in blood — but not only ours, but also the occupier's."

In Lysychansk, Russian bombardments killed three civilians, including a six-year-old boy, Lugansk governor Gaiday said on Monday.

While in the city of Donetsk, separatist authorities said three people were killed and four wounded in Ukrainian shelling on a market in the Budonivskyi district of the city. — **AFP**

■ MOST NOBLE ROYAL ORDER



Britain's Prince Charles, Prince of Wales and Britain's Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall arrive at St George's Chapel to attend the Most Noble Order of the Garter Ceremony in Windsor Castle in Windsor, west of London. The Order of the Garter is the oldest and most senior Order of Chivalry in Britain, established by King Edward III nearly 700 years ago. — **AFP**

Canada pime minister Trudeau contracted Covid a second time

OTTAWA: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has tested positive for Covid-19 for a second time in less than five months, he said on Monday, adding that he feels fine but is isolating. "I've tested positive for Covid-19. I'll be following public health guidelines and isolating", the Canadian leader said on Twitter, adding: "I feel okay."

Trudeau, who has received three doses of the Covid vaccine, also tested positive for the virus at the end of January.

He used this latest bout — coming on the heels of a trip to the United States for the Summit of the Americas that brought some two dozen regional leaders together — as an opportunity to promote Covid vaccines, saying his lack of severe symptoms was "because I got my shots."

"If you haven't, get vaccinated"

or "get boosted", he urged. "Let's protect our healthcare system, each other, and ourselves."

In January, Trudeau had missed the return of parliament after a Christmas holiday break because he'd tested positive for Covid along with two of his children.

Days earlier, a mass protest led by truckers opposed to vaccine mandates had descended on Ottawa.

Their occupation of the capital would continue for weeks before the government declared an emergency and police cleared their camp outside parliament.

At the start of the pandemic in March 2020, Trudeau also had to isolate for 14 days after his wife, Sophie Gregoire Trudeau, tested positive for the coronavirus on her return from a trip to London. — **AFP**

High stakes for Macron as parliament power at risk

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron and his allies began on Monday a crucial week of campaigning to retain a parliamentary majority, after a first round of voting that galvanised a newly formed leftwing alliance.

A strong showing by the left-wing NUPES coalition and gains by the far-right made it likely that Macron's "Ensemble" (Together) alliance could lose dozens of National Assembly seats in the second round of voting next Sunday.

"Macron's absolute majority threatened", 'Le Monde' said in a front-page banner headline, also noting the record-low turnout of just 47.5 per cent.

Macron could face reporters on Monday at the Eurosatory arms fair north of Paris, and his top lieutenants have already vowed to campaign hard against the "extremist" pledges of

NUPES's leader, the hard-left veteran Jean-Luc Melenchon.

"We're going to make every effort to get a clear and strong majority, France needs it", his technocrat Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne said in Calvados, northwest France, where she is running for her first parliament seat ever.

"There is a spending power crisis... we have a war at Europe's doorstep, we need stability", she said.

But for the left, which scored neck-and-neck with Macron's alliance in the popular vote at just over 25 per cent each, "the second round is turning into an anti-Macron referendum", Eric Coquerel, a leading NUPES candidate, told LCP television.

Based on Sunday's results, Macron and his allies could emerge with 255-295 parliament seats, polling firms projected, well below the 345 it has

currently. Should Macron fail to win the 289 seats that would give him an absolute majority, he would need to win over right-wing opponents such as the Republicans for every legislative vote.

That could complicate the centrist's plans for pushing back the retirement age to 65 as part of a pensions overhaul, as well as tax cuts or welfare reform.

Few analysts believe NUPES could secure its own majority, producing a "cohabitation" in which Melenchon would become prime minister and Macron would have a free hand only in international and defence policy.

But Melenchon does appear to have siphoned off voters disappointed with Macron's rightward tack in recent years, which earned the former investment banker the label of "president of the rich." — **AFP**



French President Emmanuel Macron arrives at the Eurosatory international land and air, land defence and security trade fair in Villepinte, a northern suburb of Paris. — **AFP**

What constitutes an eating disorder?



Dr Nisma Haris

The writer is a wellness adviser

When food serves not the purpose of satisfying hunger and deriving nutrition but becomes an obsession to overeat or under eat, here is when the stage is set for eating disorders.

Basically, eating disorders are beyond unhealthy eating and are the resultant of complex mental health issues.

The social pressure in today's world to look skinny drives this obsession and people go out of the way to meet the non-realistic standards of aesthetics. The consequences can be hazardous if left unidentified and unattended.

The common eating disorders constitutes 'Anorexia nervosa' when a person resists to eat due to an intense fear of gaining

weight despite being overly thin or underweight. Anorexics may skip meals, avoid eating in public, over exercise or diet to the extent of starving.

The second is 'Bulimia nervosa' when a person has episodes of overeating to the extent of discomfort and pain which is followed by corrective measures such as self-induced vomiting, or use of medications to ward off the discomfort. They cannot control themselves on a binge, have normal weight but the gruesome fear of putting on weight compels them to practice such behaviours.

THE RED FLAGS

Teenage girls and people in early

THE COGNITION BEHIND EATING DISORDERS ARE SOME SERIOUS LIFE ALTERING INCIDENTS THAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED

adulthood are more susceptible to develop eating disorders due to hormonal changes. There are certain changes in eating behaviours during adolescence which is normal. However, if they are developing negative perception about their body sizes and are eating too little or eating way too much, it's an alarm.

According to Allegra Broft, assistant professor of psychiatry

at Columbia University Medical Center, who has been researching eating disorders and treating patients for more than a decade; mentions, 'the most common misconception is that these disorders are just dieting gone awry, that they are trivial problems, rather than complex disorders with strong biological, psychological, and cultural components. A person with anorexia may say, "I want to stop dieting but I can't." A person with bulimia nervosa may try to exert dietary restraint but be unable to maintain it.'

THE WAY OUT

Usually the cognition behind eating disorders are some serious

life altering incidents that might have happened such as loss of a loved one, abuse, complications in relationships, moving to a different place or switching a job.

And as it is commonly said, food is the most abused stress drug, the concern is to eliminate the root cause of an eating disorder.

Correspondingly, it is also important to keep in check regarding the websites or social media influencers that your teen might be following which propagate restrictive eating as a lifestyle choice.

They must be assured that not the false beauty standards but healthy body should be the ultimate reason to celebrate.

Shinawatra brand taken to new Thai generation

SOPHIE DEVILLER

She has half a million followers on Instagram, leads a glamorous lifestyle and describes herself as the “little girl” of former premier Thaksin Shinawatra — one of the most influential and controversial figures in modern Thai history.

The 35-year-old Paetongtarn Shinawatra, youngest of billionaire tycoon Thaksin's three children, is now launching herself into the country's deeply divided political scene ahead of a national election due by March 2023. The move brings the Shinawatras' influence to a new generation and sets the stage for the latest round in the ultra-rich clan's 20-year tussle with the kingdom's royalist-military elites.

For now, Paetongtarn has a low-key role with the main opposition Pheu Thai party but she is widely tipped to be named its candidate for prime minister when an election is called.

The 72-year-old Thaksin, ousted as PM in a military coup in 2006, pops up regularly in Paetongtarn's social media posts hugging her baby or posing with his daughter over a bowl of noodles.

Paetongtarn says she draws strength from her father's “unwavering support” and insists she will always be his “little girl”.

It is a sentiment that endears her to the legion of supporters, many of them poor and rural, who swept Thaksin to election victories in 2001 and 2005.

“We need you. We miss your father,” a well-wisher told her during campaigning for Bangkok local elections last month.

But it will also raise the hackles of the powerful royalist and military elites who despise Thaksin and have long suspected him of manipulating the opposition to their political dominance from abroad.

Parties linked to the tycoon have won the most seats at every Thai election since 2001, only to find themselves toppled by coups or court rulings preceded by massive street protests.

Thaksin, the former Manchester City owner who built a telecoms empire with a fortune estimated by Forbes at nearly \$1.9 billion, now lives in self-imposed exile in Dubai to avoid corruption charges.

His sister Yingluck was elected PM in 2011, but was herself deposed by General Prayut Chan-O-Cha in a 2014 coup.

Despite her current placeholder role with Pheu Thai's inclusion and innovation committee, Paetongtarn makes no secret of her ambitions. “We can transform Thailand from a country that is riddled with debt, filled with misery, with no future in sight, into a country filled with opportunity and hope for us and future generations,” she said at a party conference last month. — AFP

Tough questions for West as Ukraine cities teeter

THOMAS GIBBONS-NEFF & MATINA STEVIS-GRIDNEFF

THE QUESTION OF HOW TO DEFEND UKRAINE NOW IS BOTH TACTICAL AND POLITICAL — AND RAISES ISSUES CLOSER TO HOME

With Russia about to encircle Sievierodonetsk, a city critical to its goal of seizing Ukraine's east, and with a neighbouring city squarely in Moscow's sights, the question of how realities on the ground will shape the next phase of the war became still more pressing for Ukraine's Western allies.

“The Russians are making every effort to cut off Sievierodonetsk,” the regional governor, Serhiy Haidai, said on Telegram, a messaging app. “The next two or three days will be significant.”

Across the river, Ukrainians trying to hold fast against the Russians in Lysychansk had the advantage of good terrain — but dwindling weaponry with which to defend it.

“If there is no help with military equipment, of course they will drive us out,” said Oleksandr Voronenko, 46, a military police officer stationed in Lysychansk. “Because everyday, the equipment is destroyed. You have to replace it with something new.”

Ukrainian officials have been imploring Nato allies for faster delivery of longer-range weapons and the urgently needed replenishment of still more basic supplies, including ammunition.

But with the momentum of the war shifting more decisively in Russia's favour, Ukraine's allies — their economies threatened and their resolve tested — may soon find themselves forced to confront far more fundamental questions than what sort of weapons to provide, including whether to put pressure on Ukraine to reach a peace agreement with Russia or risk Russian escalation with more aggressive military support.

“There was always a sense that, when the centre of gravity shifted to the south and east, there would be the potential for greater Russian gains based on greater mass and their existing territorial acquisitions,” said Ian Lesser, a former US official who heads the Brussels office of the German Marshall Fund.

“But it does raise more serious longer-term questions about the nature of the conflict, Ukraine's aims and Western aims in relation to those,” he said. As Ukrainians wait, they are suffering



Families from Lysychansk, Ukraine, wait to be evacuated by volunteers on Sunday.

horrific losses in the Donbas region where the fight for Sievierodonetsk is playing out.

By Ukraine's own assessment, it is losing between 100 and 200 people a day as the bloodshed there worsens, in part because of Russian material superiority and in part because of Ukraine's determination to fight on despite the increasingly bleak picture in the east.

Those Western supplies that have made it through to the front line are neither as plentiful or as sophisticated as Ukraine would like.

And some never even make it into battle, hit by Russian strikes before they can even be deployed.

Late on Saturday, Russian missiles hit a military warehouse in western Ukraine, wounding nearly two dozen people, and, according to Russia's Defence Ministry, destroying anti-tank and anti-aircraft missile systems supplied to Ukraine by the United States and the European Union.

The Ukrainian government has poured troops and resources into its effort to hold on to Sievierodonetsk, a strategically important industrial city and the last major urban centre in the Donbas region of Luhansk that has not yet fallen.

Russian forces have destroyed two bridges leading to the centre of Sievierodonetsk and were shelling the remaining one, an important

supply line for Ukrainian forces, the regional governor said. Now, the battle may be about to shift to its sister city, Lysychansk.

On Sunday, from atop a hill in Lysychansk, it was evident why the soon to be focal point of the Russian offensive appears easier to defend than other parts of Donbas: It is on high ground. The sprawling plains of the region are rich in natural resources, but elevation is a rarity.

That leaves the city's Ukrainian defenders in an advantageous position.

But it's impossible to defend Lysychansk, a city with a prewar population of roughly 100,000, without the supplies needed to keep Ukrainian tanks and artillery stocked with shells and the thousands of troops garrisoned there fed and equipped.

Several EU members are fretting that they have sent too much of their own ammunition to Ukraine and are lagging behind in restocking their arsenals.

With the bloc's foreign policy and defence not integrated, European leaders have been forced to try source their own military supplies.

EU officials say they will try to tap a \$9.5 billion funding pot to jointly procure military equipment, trying to ease concerns that supporting Ukraine militarily has dangerously weakened defence capabilities elsewhere in Europe.

— New York Times

Tracing back history, looking forward to future



Lakshmi Kothaneth @lakshmioman

The writer is a senior journalist and a radio anchor

Historical roots are to be celebrated because we just know ourselves better when we can reflect on yesteryears. Walking on white sand against the blueness of the Indian Ocean one could visualise the dhows that might have anchored bringing in products and to think how precious commodity clove was once upon a time.

Oman’s relation with Tanzania and its beautiful islands Zanzibar and Pemba are full of wonders. It is easily understandable why the visitors fell in love with the land and history was created. We often think history is just about events that took place, but it is much more than that - it is to do with the nature, the people and the geography because after all the ocean played an extremely important role in this particular history that took shape between two coasts of the Indian Ocean. The network expanded as the history of clove trade proves.

It must have been a tough time but the entrepreneurial instinct made people to explore and thus Oman achieved her maritime history and a healthy economy.

So is history ever irrelevant? Is it us just basking in the glory?

WE OFTEN THINK HISTORY IS JUST ABOUT EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE, BUT IT IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT - IT IS TO DO WITH THE NATURE, THE PEOPLE AND THE GEOGRAPHY

Absolutely not just basking in the glory, but learning from history. There is so much nostalgia that a young biker from Oman, Maher al Barwani, goes to Africa crossing series of nations to reach Tanzania and especially the islands Zanzibar and Pemba and becomes a cultural ambassador of Tanzania. Earlier he had visited as a young boy adding special

memories to the nostalgic stories he used to hear from his parents.

This year in 2022 as he enjoyed the moments of the reception arranged for the President of United Republic of Tanzania Samia Suluhu Hassan, during her three-day visit to the Sultanate of Oman, memories are fresh again. The relationship between the countries are being enhanced once again - connecting two lands to look forward to an era filled with a different outlook to trade e-commerce.

The first-of-its-kind strategic e-commerce collaboration between ASYAD Express and Tanzania Post sees the Sultanate of Oman in the spotlight as a logistics hub.

The collaboration has various elements e-commerce and Oman expanding its services and further establishing as logistics hub for the African market enhancing the opportunity of e-commerce between Oman and Africa.

According to Nasser al Sharji, CEO of Oman Post and ASYAD Express, the memorandum of understanding that took place recently, covers the strategy to implement e commerce, so the volume that are coming from different countries are going to be consolidated in Oman and then injected to Tanzania and thus allowing it to operate as a regional hub.

Also, goods moving from Dar es Salaam and Zanzibar to different countries will also have services provided by ASYAD Express expanding the network of services in the region.

The e-commerce services of ASYAD during the pandemic had been an asset for SMEs. Supporting the growth of e-commerce Oman Post ASYAD Express had launched international delivery service to over 220 destinations worldwide.

Available at all 72 Oman Post branches and 107 touch points across the Sultanate of Oman, ASYAD Express has been growing and now the latest MoU signed with Tanzania Post, the e commerce to the region is expected to further expand.

This is a whole new platform to explore commerce and trade in the present era.



AGAINST DEPORTATION

Demonstrators hold placards as they protest against Britain’s plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda, outside the High Court in London on Monday. UK campaigners get their last chance in court to stop the government’s first flight of asylum seekers to Rwanda, as protests mount against the policy. – AFP

Does the G20 have a future?

WILLIAM R RHODES, STUART P M MACKINTOSH

The world is facing massive common challenges that require cooperative solutions. The Covid-19 pandemic has yet to end, and work to prevent another pandemic has only just begun. Rising debt burdens are endangering lower-income countries’ economic prospects and their people’s well-being. Spiking food prices and the disruption of grain deliveries since Russia’s war on Ukraine have increased the risk of hunger in many parts of the world. And, on top of it all, governments and businesses urgently need to convert their net-zero commitments into measurable reductions in greenhouse-gas emissions.

These are daunting problems. But the biggest problem of all is that rising geopolitical tensions and war have now stymied the principal mechanism, the G20 leaders’ forum, for organising global responses to them. When strategic clashes over national security and economic and technological primacy loom, effective international cooperation becomes almost impossible, and that increases risks for us all.

The G20 was created by US President George W Bush (building on an existing regular summit for finance ministers and central bankers) to address the 2008 global financial crisis. In 2008 and 2009, world leaders came together and pledged more than \$1 trillion to stabilise the global economy, calm markets, and financially reinforce the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

At that time, the new organisation was considered the world’s most capable, inclusive, and dynamic venue for joint action and policy coordination. It proved quite effective in its early years, overseeing cooperation on issues ranging from financial stability and risk to

inclusive growth and climate change. But with major players now blocking it from operating effectively, the G20 cannot deliver the same public goods today.

The G20 process was first damaged by Russia’s 2014 annexation of Crimea, which effectively turned the group into the “G19+1.” And though a US-China deal on climate change in 2016 reinvigorated the group, US President Donald Trump undermined it again by refusing to sign joint communiqués and rejecting US commitments to the rules-based international order.

Now that Russia is waging a full-scale war on Ukraine, the G20 summit this November is almost certain to be a failure. Indonesia, which currently holds the rotating presidency, simply cannot be expected to arbitrate between angry clashing superpowers. China has resisted calls to exclude Russia from the G20 as a punishment for the war in Ukraine. The parallel meeting for G20 finance ministers also is in trouble; at its last gathering, in April, US Secretary of the Treasury Janet Yellen and many others walked out when Russia’s representative spoke.

The G20’s paralysis is bad news for inclusive diplomacy and many necessary reform efforts. Geopolitical tensions, war, and new national-security concerns mean that the multilateral coordination of globalisation that emerged in the 2000s is now on life support. Only when the war in Ukraine has ended can diplomatic bridges and supply chains begin to be reconstructed. And even then, the chances off a sudden rapprochement between the United States and China – let alone between the US and Russia – are exceedingly low.

Pursuing many of the same goals established by Trump, US President Joe Biden’s administration has committed itself to a hardline policy towards China on trade, technology, and other matters.

This unpromising diplomatic posture bodes ill for coordinated global efforts, especially to address climate change. The race to lead in green industries will instead become part of the zero-sum US-China rivalry. The Chinese already see it this way and are going green fast. They are on target to raise renewable energy generation from 29 per cent of consumption in 2020 to 33 per cent in 2025. The authorities’ 450 gigawatts Gobi Desert renewables plan – twice the size of all installed renewable capacity in the US – is on target for completion by 2030. China’s advantage in the rare-earth minerals that are essential for batteries and other green technologies is also causing American unease as it tightens supply.

The Biden administration likewise sees national investment in green tech through a geopolitical lens. While the US Congress has failed to pass meaningful climate legislation, the administration has invoked the Defence Production Act to drive more domestic production of renewables. The race is on, and trade tensions will rise as the US and China seek to secure and maintain an edge over the other.

To be sure, this competition could have positive effects for the planet as each superpower uses various net-zero policies (say, on electric vehicles, infrastructure, or the cost of carbon) for their own national green goals. But the benefits are unlikely to outweigh the costs associated with rising geopolitical tensions and the weakening of common global climate targets and consistent, coordinated policy implementation. History suggests that these urgent goals will languish as leading powers vie for short- and medium-term geopolitical advantage. The decline of the G20 is both a harbinger and a cause of the global turmoil that awaits.

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BERRETTINI DEFEATS INJURY-HIT MURRAY FOR STUTTGART TITLE

STUTTGART, GERMANY: Matteo Berrettini made a winning return to tennis on Sunday when he defeated an injury-hit Andy Murray 6-4, 5-7, 6-3 to win the Stuttgart grass court title.

Berrettini, who last played in March and then underwent hand surgery, won his ninth Stuttgart match without a loss as he backed up his 2019 debut trophy on the grass of the Weissenhof Club.

Murray, who took the match into a deciding third set as he played in the 70th final of his career, was bothered by apparent groin pain and was seen by the trainer after dropping serve to love to begin the final set.

“This is so unbelievable,” 10th-ranked Berrettini said after claiming his first title since winning Queen’s Club last June. “This was the last thing I could have imagined when I came back to the court.

“I thought for a second I might not be able to play this event, now that I’m here holding the trophy it does not seem real.

“My goal was to do well after the first surgery of my life. I didn’t play my best tennis at the start of the week, but I got better with each match.”

Berrettini gave the 68th-ranked Murray full credit for a top effort. “Andy has showed many times how he can come back,” the 26-year-old Italian said.

“This is so unbelievable. This was the last thing I could have imagined when I came back to the court. I thought for a second I might not be able to play this event, now that I’m here holding the trophy it does not seem real

**MATTEO
BERRETTINI**
*Stuttgart grasscourt
champion*

body can hold up a little bit longer so I can keep playing matches like this.” Murray looked like taking charge as he broke the Italian to level the final at one set apiece.

But the momentum did not last with Murray losing serve to love to start the third set.

With his long-standing groin problem appearing to bother him, Murray immediately called for the trainer.

He was treated on court but was never able to close the gap on Berrettini despite saving a match point in the final game.

After a strenuous point in the seventh game, Murray lay down in front of his chair for a few moments to catch his breath as the trainer briefly looked again at his right hip and groin area.

The three-time Grand Slam champion held serve for 3-4 but was unable to stop the Italian’s final push to victory on the back of 19 aces. — AFP



Oman TT team gears up for West Asian qualifiers

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

Oman national table tennis team is gearing up to take part in the West Asian Table Tennis qualifiers which will take place from June 23-26 in Bahrain.

The Oman TT team is currently undergoing a training camp abroad in Iran as part of the preparation programme.

The camp is under the watchful eyes of the Iranian coach Omid Shamas Sharbabaki, head coach of national TT team who took charge of leading technical staff of the team since last October.

The warm up gathering began on June 7 and will conclude on June 21. During the camp, the experienced Iranian coach focused on shaping the players for the forthcoming assignments including West Asian Table Tennis qualifiers and then West Asian Table Tennis championships which will be held in Jordan from July 26-31 in Amman city.

The ongoing external preparatory camp will feature intensive morning and evening sessions beside some friendly fixtures against some ranking Iranian players who represent the Iran TT team.

The Omani paddlers went through a domestic camp ahead of the Iran camp at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex venue.



During the camp, the Iranian coach opted for eight players including: Loqman al Farsi, Badar al Jassasi, Mohammed al Motawa, Moyad al Motawa, Ahmed al Riyami, Turki al Abri, Ali al Rawahi and Ali al Ajmi.

The Oman delegation in the Iran camp featured the attendance of Muhannad al Balushi as assistant coach to coach Omid Shamas.

The Oman TT team will target to advance from the West Asian Table Tennis qualifiers and then

will eye a top performance in the upcoming edition of the West Asian Table Tennis championships in Jordan this summer. In the last edition in 2019, Oman (Under-12) team paddlers had delivered a top show as they managed to clinch a bronze medal and end in third place.

The Oman TT team had defeated United Arab Emirates 3-1 in the third/fourth play-off match. In the semifinal round, Oman team had suffered a 3-2 loss against Saudi Arabia in a thriller.

Omani paddlers Ahmed al Riyami and Loqman al Farsi were the stars of the Sultanate of Oman team for U-12.

Many faces of the selected TT squad featured potential players who delivered top performance in the latest WTT Youth and WTT Contender events which was held in Oman in 2021 and 2022 respectively. Loqman al Farasi, Ahmed al Riyami, Turki al Abri, Mohammed al Motawa and Moyad al Motawa took part in the event.

Hamad clinches third place in Lebanon Rally

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

Oman's Hamad al Wahaibi bagged the third place in the Spring Rally, at the first stage of the 2022 Lebanese Rally Championship which is in its 37th edition, organised by the Lebanese Automobile and Tourism Club in of Keserwan and Jbeil, with the participation of 21 cars, at a distance of 232.27 km.

Roger Feghali and his co-driver Judy Feghali clinched the rally title 'Volkswagen Polo', while Tamer Ghandour and his co-driver Salim Jalilati finished second in "Skoda Fabia" by 38.9 seconds off the leaders.

The Omani international rider Hamad al Wahaibi and his New Zealand co-driver Tony Sercombe clocked a

time difference of one minute and 14 seconds from the winner in 66.68 km race as first stage.

The cars set off from Lebanon in six stages, and 18 out of 21 cars crossed the arrival line. Roger began the journey to defend his title by scoring the best time in all stages, outperforming his opponents. Feghali scored the best time, 13 seconds compared with Ghandour, and 35 seconds from Hamad al Wahaibi, in the fourth stages.

In the fifth and sixth stages, Feghali achieved the difference in the general standings with 36.8 seconds from Ghandour, who is the champion of Lebanon in 2016, and one minute and 14 seconds from Hamad al Wahaibi.



IPL cricket rights battle goes into day three



MUMBAI: The battle for broadcast rights for the Indian Premier League reached fever pitch on Monday with global media giants reportedly bidding \$5.65 billion to show and stream the hugely popular cricket contest.

Attracting some of cricket's top stars from India and abroad with large salaries, the pioneering IPL helped make Twenty20, a shorter and more exciting format of the sport, hugely popular, spawning copycat events worldwide.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) began an online auction on Sunday for four different packages to show the annual two-month event, attracting giants such as Disney, Sony and Indian tycoon Mukesh Ambani's Reliance group.

On Monday TV rights for the Indian market were sold for \$3.02 billion while the digital streaming segment went for \$2.56 billion for five seasons from 2023 to 2027, but it was unclear to whom, media reports said.

— AFP

Haaland satisfies Man City's need for a striker

MANCHESTER, UK: Manchester City are still waiting for their moment of Champions League glory, but by winning the race to sign Erling Haaland they have established themselves as a go-to destination for Europe's top talent.

The 21-year-old goalscoring phenomenon had his choice of the continent's top clubs thanks to a reported buyout clause of 60 million euros (£51 million, \$63 million) that saw him leave Borussia Dortmund well below his market value.

By comparison, Liverpool are set to spend up to 100 million euros for the far less-hyped Uruguay forward Darwin Nunez from Benfica.

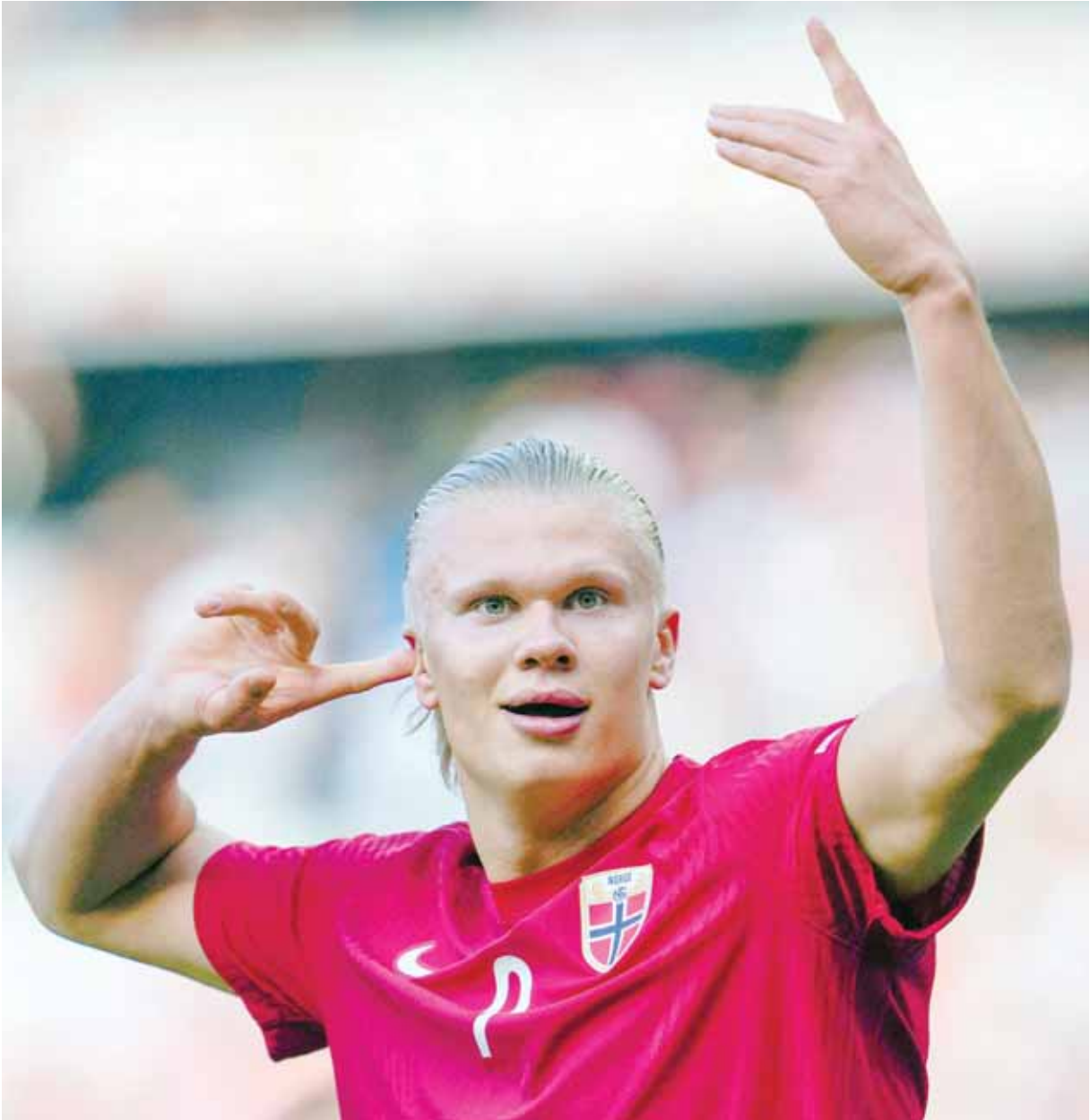
Real Madrid wanted Haaland at the Bernabeu next season, Barcelona sought him as a successor to Lionel Messi, while Bayern Munich again aimed to swoop on their Bundesliga rivals.

The Norwegian, however, will instead line up in City blue next season, just as his father Alfie-Inge did between 2000-2003 during a very different era for the club.

"First of all my father a little bit", said Haaland when asked why he choose City. "I was born in England, I've been a City fan my whole life. I know a lot about the club.

"I feel at home here and also I think I can develop and get the best out of my game at City."

The arrival of petrodollars from Abu Dhabi has long since transformed City's fortunes, with Pep Guardiola's men having won four Premier League titles in five seasons.



But Haaland is the man City need to fill a void if they are to reach the next level — a superstar striker.

City have played the best part of two seasons without a recognised number nine.

An attempt to land Harry Kane as Sergio Aguero's successor fell

short last summer and it may have cost City another shot at Champions League glory.

Despite beating Real Madrid 4-2 in the first leg of their semifinal, Guardiola's men missed a series of sitters to put the tie to bed.

That came back to haunt them

last week as Real miraculously hauled themselves off the floor to score twice in the final seconds of the return leg on route to winning the competition for a 14th time.

Haaland, however has scored 23 goals in just 19 Champions League appearances for Salzburg and Dortmund.

City future-proofing
What remains to be seen is how well he can be embedded into Guardiola's system.

League titles won with Samuel Eto'o at Barcelona, Robert Lewandowski in his time at Bayern Munich and Aguero in his early years at City dispels the notion Guardiola's football cannot accommodate a number nine.

"I think I can develop a lot under Pep and in this club. I think I can get better in a lot of things and hopefully I can score a lot of goals", said Haaland.

But the recent story of City's success under the Catalan coach has been one of collective brilliance.

Riyad Mahrez was their top scorer last season with 24 goals in all competitions this season, ahead of Kevin De Bruyne (19), Raheem Sterling (17) and Phil Foden (14).

Not all superstar signings have gone as planned for Guardiola in the past.

Haaland's arrival has sparked comparisons with Zlatan Ibrahimovic's ill-fated season at Barcelona in 2009/10.

And Jack Grealish, despite costing City £100 million to make him the most expensive player in English football history, spent much of his debut season on the bench.

But by landing one of Europe's hottest properties, City are also looking to a future beyond Guardiola, whose current contract runs out in 2023.

"His rise has been remarkable, but he is still only 21". — AFP

Shadab stars as Pakistan clinch clean-sweep of West Indies

MULTAN, PAKISTAN: All-rounder Shadab Khan hit a fighting half century before taking four wickets to anchor Pakistan's 53-run win over the West Indies in the third and final day-night international in Multan which was interrupted by a dust storm.

Shadab hit 86 to lift Pakistan to 269-9 after unlikely West Indian hero Nicholas Pooran grabbed four wickets to leave the home team struggling at 117-5.

Opener Imam-ul-Haq scored a brilliant 68-ball 62 but there was a rare failure for world number one ODI batsman Babar Azam who fell for one off three balls.

Shadab's legspin then fetched 4-62 to dismiss the visitors for 216 in 37.2 overs, giving Pakistan 30 invaluable points in the ODI Super League, a qualification round for next year's World Cup in India.

The 3-0 clean-sweep lifted Pakistan to 90 points, fourth in the 13-team ODI League table while the West Indies are fifth with 80.

A dust storm during Pakistan's innings reduced the match to 48 overs-a-side but that could not stop Pakistan from taking a tenth consecutive ODI series win over the West Indies.

Pakistan won the first match by five wickets and the second by 120 runs, also played in Multan.

Shadab dismissed Keacy Carty (33), Rovman Powell (ten) and top-scorer Akeal Hosein who made a career best 37-ball 60 with six sixes and two boundaries.

When Hosein and Romario Shepherd added 49 for the eighth wicket, the visitors threatened a comeback but both fell within 12 runs to end a miserable series.

Opener Shai Hope (21), Shamarrh Brooks (18), Pooran (11) and Powell got good starts but fell to rash shots.

Left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz had Brooks and Keemo Paul (21) to finish with 2-56.

Earlier, it was part-time bowler Pooran who hit Pakistan hard.



Pakistan's Shadab Khan celebrates after taking the wicket of West Indies' Hayden Walsh Junior (unseen) during the third and final ODI against West Indies at the Multan International Cricket Stadium in Multan. — AFP

Pooran turned his arm over only for the second time in his 43-match ODI career to take 4-48 after Pakistan slumped from 85 without loss to 117-5, having won the toss and opted to bat.

The innings seemed to have fallen apart with Babar Azam's rare failure for one but Shadab wielded his bat to the best effect.

Shadab hit three sixes and four boundaries off 78 balls before being bowled in the last over.

He improved upon his 54 against New Zealand in Wellington in 2018.

Sensing the Multan stadium pitch helping spin, Pooran

brought himself up after Fakhar Zaman (35) and Haq gave Pakistan a solid start.

Pooran chipped in with the wickets of Zaman, Haq, Mohammad Rizwan (11) and Mohammad Haris (nought) off just 25 balls, having never taken more than one wicket in his first class career.

Haq smashed seven boundaries and a six off 68 balls for his 14th ODI half century. He became only the second batter to score seven or more fifties in successive ODIs.

Former Pakistan great Javed Miandad, celebrating his 65th birthday on Sunday, set the record

Opener Imam-ul-Haq scored a brilliant 68-ball 62 but there was a rare failure for world number one ODI batsman Babar Azam who fell for one off three balls

for most fifties in successive ODIs with nine, scored in 1987.

In between Pooran's destruction, Azam fell leg-before to spinner Hayden Walsh, having hit a century and 77 in the first two matches.

Shadab added 84 with Khushdil Shah (34) for the sixth wicket and 40 for the eighth with Mohammad Wasim who made six. — AFP

SCOREBOARD

PAKISTAN	
F Zaman b Pooran	35
Imam c Hope b Pooran	62
B Azam lbw Walsh	1
M Rizwan c Hope b Pooran	11
M Haris c Hosein b Pooran	0
K Shah b Hosein	34
S Khan b Seales	86
M Nawaz c Hosein b Paul	8
M Wasim b Paul	6
H Ali (not out)	8
S Dahani (not out)	4
Extras (B-1, LB-2, NB-2, W-9)	14
Total (for 9 wkts, 48 overs)	269
Fall of wickets:	1-85, 2-88, 3-113, 4-113, 5-117, 6-201, 7-217, 8-257, 9-263
Bowling:	Seales 6-1-39-1, Paul 9-0-57-2, Shepherd 3-0-13-0, Walsh 10-0-66-1, Pooran 10-0-48-4, Hosein 10-0-43-1
WEST INDIES	
S Hope c Khushdil b Hasan	21
K Mayers c Haq b Dahani	5
S Brooks b Wasim	18
K Carty st Haris b Shadab	33
N Pooran c Khushdil b Nawaz	11
R Powell c Zaman b Shadab	10
A Hosein st Haris b Shadab	60
K Paul c Haris b Nawaz	21
R Shepherd c Azam b Hasan	16
H Walsh lbw Shadab	3
J Seales (not out)	0
Extras (B-8, LB-4, NB-1, W-5)	18
Total (all out, 37.2 overs)	216
Fall of wickets:	1-25, 2-52, 3-52, 4-69, 5-93, 6-129, 7-155, 8-204, 9-216
Bowling:	Hasan 5-2-29-2, Dahani 6-0-36-1, Wasim 7-1-21-1, Nawaz 10-1-56-2, Shadab 9-1-62-4

Oman Women eye Asia Cup Qualification

MUSCAT: The National Women's Team will be touring to Malaysia to participate in the ACC Women's T20 Championship, scheduled to be held from June 17 to 25, 2022.

10 sides will compete in the tournament namely Oman, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Nepal, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Myanmar and Bhutan from which two finalists will qualify for the Women's T20 Asia Cup 2022, joining regional heavyweights India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and hosts Bangladesh in October.

The format of the tournament schedules 2 groups of 5 teams each - Group A: UAE, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar and Singapore and Group B: Nepal, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Bhutan and Bahrain - in a round robin league within their respective groups.

The 2 teams from each group qualify for the semifinals then.

Oman's Captain, Vaishali Jesrani, speaking on the team claims, "Another big exposure in our way, definitely a platform for many potential girls to enhance and express

their cricketing potential. Women's cricket is on a upbeat and being a part of such tournaments are motivating girls to be engaged with the sport at all times. It's about new opportunities and new learning. Oman women's cricket is building stronger block by block. We are hopeful of doing well in the tournament. The girls have been training day-in day-out to be expressive on the field."

The Oman Women's National Team's previous tournament exposure at the international level came in the form of the GCC Women's T20I Championship Cup held at the Oman Cricket Academy between March 20 and 26, 2022. With 4 wins in 5 games, Oman finished second behind the United Arab Emirates.

The competition itself is one that is aligned with and borne out of the Asian Cricket Council's vision for the development of women's cricket in the region. It was originally set to be held in June 2020, but the global onset of the Covid-19 pandemic rendered its commencement untenable.



Conway, Young put NZ in strong position at Nottingham

NOTTINGHAM, UK: Devon Conway and Will Young put New Zealand in a strong position on a placid batting track against England in the second Test.

Although Conway was out for a well-made 52, New Zealand were ahead by 128 runs as tea was taken with the visitors at 114/2.

ANDERSON MILESTONE

Earlier, James Anderson claimed his 650th Test wicket as England reduced New Zealand to 27-1 in their second innings at lunch.

Anderson was gifted his landmark wicket as New Zealand opener Tom Latham left a straight ball that clattered into his stumps.

The 39-year-old fast bowler is just third man ever to reach the landmark after spin legends Shane Warne and Muttiah Muralitharan.

Anderson's milestone came just months after he admitted he was "praying" his international career wasn't over following the decision to drop him for the West Indies tour.

Restored to the team by new captain Ben Stokes, Anderson

looks as good as ever and his experience will be crucial if England are to win their first Test series since January 2021.

England are locked in an intriguing battle with New Zealand after being dismissed for 539 in Monday's morning session at Trent Bridge.

Joe Root scored a majestic 176 and Ben Foakes added a lively 56 to ensure New Zealand held only a 14-run lead following their own mammoth first innings total of 553.

New Zealand's cautious start to the second innings took them 41 runs ahead of England, with Will Young unbeaten on six and Devon Conway 17 not out.

The tense final overs before lunch were a stark contrast to the run spree that preceded it.

England had bludgeoned 383 runs on Sunday, starting day four on 473-5 after Root's fastest Test century and 145 from Ollie Pope.

Root resumed on 163 and Foakes on 24, while New Zealand suffered a blow when Kyle Jamison was ruled out of day four while the pace bowler awaited the



results of scans on the back injury he sustained on Sunday.

Foakes took the attack to Tim Southee in the first over of the day, smashing two boundaries as

the bewildered pace bowler was plundered for 12 runs.

That blistering start was in keeping with new coach Brendon McCullum's desire for England to

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND FIRST INNINGS ----- 553	
ENGLAND FIRST INNINGS (O/N: 473/5):	
A Lees c Mitchell b Henry	67
Z Crawley c Blundell b Boulton	4
O Pope c Henry b Boulton	145
J Root c Southee b Boulton	176
J Bairstow c Blundell b Boulton	8
B Stokes (c) c Boulton b Bracewell	46
B Foakes (run out)	56
S Broad c Mitchell b Bracewell	9
M Potts b Boulton	3
J Leach (not out)	0
J Anderson st Blundell b Bracewell	9
Extras (B-12, LB-3, W-1)	16
Total (all out, 128.2 overs)	539
Fall of wickets:	1-6, 2-147, 3-334, 4-344, 5-405, 6-516, 7-527, 8-527, 9-530
Bowling:	T Southee 32-1-154-0, T Boulton 33-3-8-106-5, M Henry 27-5-128-1, K Jamieson 16-3-3-66-0, M Bracewell 17-2-2-62-3, D Mitchell 2-0-8-0
NEW ZEALAND SECOND INNINGS:	
T Latham (c) b Anderson	4
W Young (not out)	49
D Conway c Bairstow b Leach	52
H Nicholls (not out)	3
Extras (B-4, NB-2)	6
Total (For 2 wkts, 37 overs)	114
Fall of wickets:	1-4, 2-104
Bowling:	J Anderson 8-1-18-1, S Broad 7-1-23-0, M Potts 7-4-6-0, J Leach 11-2-53-1, B Stokes 4-1-10-0

slip cordon for six, his first Test maximum since February 2021 in India.

There was no mercy shown by Root, who brought up the 500 with an effortless four moments later.

For only the seventh time in the history of Tests in England both teams had made over 500 in the first innings.

Foakes crushed a four to reach a blistering hundred partnership with Root and then blasted another boundary to get his 50 in what felt like the blink of an eye.

Trent Boulton finally stemmed the bleeding as he dismissed Root, who chipped to Southee at cover after chasing a wide delivery.

Slamming the bat against his pads in frustration, Root departed to spark a collapse of five wickets for 23 runs.

Stuart Broad perished trying to wallop Michael Bracewell as his outside edge produced a one-handed diving catch from Daryl Mitchell, a superb piece of fielding at odds with a host of drops from both teams over the first three days. — AFP

play aggressively at all times.

- Outrageous Root -

Root joined the party with an outrageous reverse scoop off Southee that flew high over the

business

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Brent Crude \$120.06
Light Crude \$118.57



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Pact signed to kickstart growth of semiconductor industry in Oman



LANDMARK ENDEAVOUR:
Private firm to invest in Oman's first semiconductor plant

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

The Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology and the Ministry of Labour signed on Monday a cooperation agreement with the Semiconductor Development and Investment Company (SDIC) to support the establishment of the Sultanate of Oman's first project centring on the design and manufacture of semiconductors.

It envisions the implementation of a programme, which was designed in cooperation with the Training Support Centre at the Ministry of Labour, that aims to enhance research, design and development through local partnerships in the public and private sectors.

It also aims to support the

IT AIMS TO SUPPORT THE GROWTH AND DIVERSIFICATION OF THE OMANI ECONOMY BY SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES THAT LEAD TO THE LOCALISATION OF INDUSTRIES IN VARIOUS TECHNOLOGICAL SECTORS.

growth and diversification of the Omani economy by supporting sustainable human capital development programmes that lead to the localisation of industries in various technological sectors.

The agreement was signed by Shaikh Saud bin Hamad al Hamouda, Director General of Development and Quality Assurance, on behalf of the Ministry of Labour, while Fahd bin Sultan al Abri, Director General of Sector Development and Capacity Building, signed on behalf of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology. SDIC was represented by its CEO, Farhat Jahangir.

In a statement to Oman News Agency, Fahd al Abri of the Ministry of Transport,

Communications and Information Technology said initiative will contribute to the localisation of technology and create job and business opportunities for qualified national cadres, emerging technology companies and the private sector.

He added that the project will boost the gross domestic product as semiconductors enter into the manufacture of devices that are linked to the international information network, household electronic appliances, equipment, cars, planes, trains and other devices that have become part of everyday life.

Sharifa Aided, from the Training Support Centre at the Ministry of Labour, said the project will strengthen the position of the Sultanate of Oman on the map of

global industries and contribute to providing the private sector with qualified national cadres that meet investment needs.

She said the 10-month specialised training programme is designed to provide graduates with the skills, values and knowledge required to compete globally, as the training will be conducted by international investors using modern and advanced tools for chip and chip design, and the training will take place at the University of Nizwa.

The Ministry of Labour will ensure the qualification of 120 job-seekers from engineering graduates specialised in the field of microelectronics design and prepare them to join the labour market through the employment-related training programme.

SDIC has submitted a provisional business and investment plan for a period of five years, in addition to training a group of Omani job-seekers who are graduates of related IT majors.

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OETC inks pacts with GCC Interconnection Authority



BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) has signed three agreements with the GCC Electricity Interconnection Authority to support power exchange and trading arrangements between the two sides.

The agreements were signed at the Authority's headquarters in Dammam (Saudi Arabia) in the presence of representatives of the stakeholder parties.

The first agreement enshrines the exclusive right to use the electrical interconnection assets.

It spells out the mechanisms for ownership, operation and maintenance of the 220 kV interconnection assets in the Sultanate of Oman on behalf of the GCC Interconnection Authority.

The second agreement grants OETC the mandate to management the entire link, although the Authority has the exclusive right to use the assets of the interconnection in the event of any emergency and energy exchanges.

The third pact sets out the terms for the operation of the interconnection between the two parties.

Oman Air increases flights to Indian destinations

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

Oman Air, the Sultanate of Oman's flag carrier, has amended its summer schedule to reflect increased frequency and flight resumptions.

Based on the table below, the airline is boosting frequencies to the following 8 Indian destinations as demand increases: Mumbai — 7 flights, Delhi — 7, Bengaluru — 7, Hyderabad — 7, Chennai — 7, Kozhikode — 7, Kochi — 7 and Goa — 3.

Between Muscat and its operational India destinations,

the airline introduced wide-body service, including the B787 Dreamliner and Airbus A330 in addition to the Boeing 737.

Guests should check omanair.com for the most up-to-date flight schedules and times, as they are subject to change. As of May 22, 2022, all Covid-19 preventive safety precautions and procedures previously in place at airports across Oman have been lifted.

Guests departing Oman should ensure that they are aware of all pre-departure requirements and requirements during their flights, which are provided at omanair.com.

Contract signed for RO 7m steel unit at SOHAR Freezone

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JUNE 13

SOHAR Port and Freezone has signed an agreement with Sohar Steel Rolling to lease approximately 40,000 sqm of land for the construction of a steel rod manufacturing unit at the Freezone.

With an estimated total investment of RO 7 million, the project includes the construction of facilities for melting/smeltering in the first phase and steel rolling in the second phase.

Anticipated to be in operation

towards Q3, 2023 the project is expected to create considerable opportunities for business collaborations, while adding to the growing number of leased areas in SOHAR Freezone flourishing metals cluster.

Omar bin Mahmood al Mahrizi, Chief Executive Officer of SOHAR Freezone, DCEO SOHAR Port said, "At SOHAR, we are always looking to expand the possibilities to grow our metals cluster, which is one of the most promising sectors.

Sohar Steel Rolling's new facility is poised to meet the



huge demand for stainless steel manufacturing.

This collaboration is as a positive step towards enhancing

in-country value by boosting the competitiveness of SOHAR Freezone in bringing in new investments linked to the downstream of these industries."

Nimer Ibrahim Nimer Elsamna, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar Steel Rolling, added, "With access to raw materials and reliable, affordable energy, SOHAR Freezone offers an ideal environment for us to enhance our competitive position and grow sustainably.

We look forward to supporting the development of Oman's metal manufacturers and production

industries, while contributing to its wider economic diversification objectives."

More and more local and international investors are taking advantage of the opportunities for investments at SOHAR thriving, multi-billion dollar metals cluster currently centred around iron and steel production, and ferrochrome and aluminium smelting.

Over 50 per cent of SOHAR industrial tenants are primary and secondary metal projects and/or downstream activities, enticed by the mutual benefits that add value to their operations.

MoSD honours Alizz Islamic Bank for CSR efforts

MUSCAT: In recognition of its pioneering role in giving back to the community, Alizz Islamic Bank was honoured by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) at an event that was held by the ministry to felicitate government and private organisations that offer support to social responsibility programmes.

The event was held under the patronage of Sayyid Kamil bin Fahd al Said in the presence of HE Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najar, Minister of Social Development, CEOs and representatives of the private sector and a number of distinguished guests.

The award was received by Murtadha bin Jawad al Lawati, AGM — Head of Marketing & Corporate Communications Department of Alizz Islamic Bank. Alizz Islamic Bank recently entered into voluntary partnerships to support various CSR initiatives, under direct

supervision by the CEO, including contributing towards building the Centre of Excellence for Children with Disabilities and collecting donations for orphans of the Child Care Centre.

Additionally, it is seeking to engage employees in voluntary work, in collaboration with a number of associations.

The bank implemented various social responsibility programmes, such as a direct donation of RO 150,000 to the Oman Charitable Organization's Cyclone Shaheen Aid Fund and a relief and food campaign launched to support those affected by the Cyclone, with the participation of a large number of volunteers from across the Sultanate of Oman who distributed aids to those affected.

Moreover, the bank also offered support to its customers that were directly affected by Cyclone Shaheen. Alizz Islamic Bank also continued



its 'Iftar Sayem' initiative, for the eighth consecutive year, to distribute Ramadhan boxes, filled with essential food items,

THE BANK SUPPORTED THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS EFFORTS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES WITH THE ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES THEY NEED IN ORDER TO ACCESS THE DISTANCE LEARNING PLATFORMS THAT SCHOOLS RESORTED TO AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC

to low-income families in the communities that the bank operates in.

The bank supported the Ministry of Social Developments efforts to provide students from low-income families with the advanced technologies they need in order to access the distance learning platforms that schools resorted to as a result of the pandemic.

In this regard, the bank donated 50 laptops and 10 tablets to the ministry to

ensure that these children can continue their education. The social responsibility programmes implemented by the bank are in line with its mission of achieving exceptional and sustainable outcomes for our shareholders.

Since its inception, Alizz Islamic Bank launched several projects that had a positive impact on the community and created value for everyone.

The bank has prioritised investing in our communities with the aim of providing a better life for the people it serves across the Sultanate of Oman as it believed that investment in sustainable initiatives is the key to the welfare of the society.

The bank has offered strong support to effective national organisations that aim to build strong and flexible communities and has contributed to the growth of non-profit social organizations.

Take the lead in the stunning Kia K5 GTL



MUSCAT: Kia K5 is one of the most stunning and feature-loaded sedans in the Kia range. Offering customers immense opportunities to make loads of fine impressions, the K5 GTL is truly distinctive in every aspect.

The K5 GTL's impressive design is complemented by its equally thrilling power packed performance. The K5 GTL's angular design language represents another chapter of boldness and passion for the brand.

From the side, the K5's low-slung and fastback silhouette confirms the impression it was made to excite, highlighted by a chrome garnish that spans the roofline and wraps around the rear glass.

A number of exterior design traits give the K5 GTL an unexpected level of visual impact. These include LED headlamps, LED daytime running lights, LED front fog lamps, LED rear fog lamps, LED rear combination lamps, 18" alloy wheels, solar glass, panoramic sunroof and Dual LED headlamps.

Powering journeys in the K5 GTL is a 2.5L GDI engine dishing out 191 HP and 25.1 kg.m. torque. This is paired to a 8-speed automatic transmission.

Making these experiences even more indulging are a range of features like drive mode select, auto cruise control, power driver seat, auto AC, power passenger seat, navigation with 10.25" display, premium music system, red leather seats, ventilated front seats, paddle shifter, aluminium pedals, mood lamp, android auto &

car play and more.

Harmonising the open layout of the cockpit is a newly designed infotainment display that seamlessly stretches into the instrument panel, creating a futuristic, three-dimensional layout and driver-centric space.

Creating an inviting and comfortable interior are a range of features that include tinted glass, tilt & telescopic steering, radio with USB, audio remote control, driver's seat height adjuster, rear AC vents, leather AT knob and more.

While the K5 GTL does its bit to increase the excitement on every journey, its range of advanced safety features ensure you make the most of your experiences. The K5 GTL is equipped with driver and front passenger airbags, side and curtain airbags, electro chromic inside mirror, Blind Spot Collision Warning (BCW), Blind Spot View Monitor (BVM), Around View Monitor (AVM), Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS), Electronic Stability Program (ESP), Tyre Pressure Monitoring system (TPMS), Front and Rear Parking Assist system and Electric Parking Brake (EPB) with auto hold and more.

Kia (www.kia.com) is a global mobility brand with a vision to create sustainable mobility solutions for consumers, communities, and societies around the world.

Reliable International Automotive (RIA), the distributor for Kia in Oman provides a rewarding ownership experience for customers.

Ooredoo's Hala plans now come with open data



MUSCAT: Giving its customers even more freedom and flexibility, all of Ooredoo's popular Hala prepaid plans now come with open data.

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SIM is absolutely free.

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Combining seamless connectivity and an awesome customer experience, it's the latest way Ooredoo is enriching its customers' digital lives. To subscribe to a Hala prepaid plan, users can log into the Ooredoo App.

Majan University College now an IELTS test venue



MUSCAT: Majan University College, one of the leading private higher education institutions in the Sultanate of Oman, has signed an agreement with IDP Education Oman to become an IELTS test venue.

This agreement provides for the conduct of IELTS test on the college campus. As an IELTS test venue, Majan is open to the applicants to Majan's academic programmes as well as candidates from the community who need to take the test.

This partnership with IDP Education Oman reflects Majan's strategy of partnering with leading higher education institutions and service providers to offer end-to-end solutions to those seeking academic qualifications. IDP Education is a

proud co-owner of IELTS alongside the British Council and Cambridge Assessment English.

As a global leader in international education services, IDP Education operates in 31 countries, with headquarters in Australia.

On signing the agreement, Dr Maha Kobeil, Dean and CEO — Majan University College, emphasised the importance of making education services accessible as well as serving the community through partnerships.

Yasir Majeed, Country Manager Oman at IDP Education Ltd, reiterated his organisation's commitment to partnering with Majan in providing IELTS testing services.

ahlibank's Wafra cashback campaign a win-win for customers

MUSCAT: Consistent in its endeavour to create a superlative customer-centric service, ahlibank continues its special offering that comes with a one-time cash back of 1% for its new Omani and expatriate customers.

The Wafra cashback campaign, which will run until end of June 2022, is a win-win for new customers of ahlibank.

This fabulous 1% cash back offer is for customers who maintain a minimum average deposit of RO 5,000 in their Wafra account for at least a three-month period and will be credited cash back into their account within six weeks after the completion of the three-month deposit date.



Expressing his satisfaction on the success of this new campaign, Muneer al Balushi, AGM — Head of Retail Distribution, said, "The customer is at the core of everything ahlibank does. The Wafra Cashback Campaign is reflective of our commitment to

enhancing customer services by offering them tangible rewards for banking with us.

This one-time cashback reward is an incentive that communicates our dedication to customers. Our customers not only get to enjoy the rewards,

but they also learn to cultivate long-term financial habits that will hold them in good stead and secure their future. It is a win-win opportunity for everyone."

As one of Oman's fastest growing banks, ahlibank understands that as customer preferences and needs are rapidly evolving and to meet them, financial institutions need to ensure outstanding customer experiences.

By introducing value-added schemes and services, ahlibank continues to use its innovative platforms to augment its offerings and at the same time enrich its customers with rewards, services, and products that in turn ensue that customer satisfaction is always high.

British economy shrinks for second month in a row

LONDON: British economic output declined for a second month in a row in April, weighed down by decades-high inflation, official data showed on Monday.

Gross domestic product fell 0.3 per cent in April after a drop of 0.1 per cent in March, the Office for National Statistics said in a statement.

Output in the services, production and construction sectors fell — “the first time that all main sectors have contributed negatively to a monthly gross domestic product estimate since January 2021”, the ONS said, as the data added to fears of recession.

The ONS noted that “businesses continued to report the impact of price increases and supply chain shortages”.

The data comes as the Bank of England is set to raise its main



A man buys fruits at a market stall in central London. — AFP

INFLATION IS BEING FUELLED BY SOARING FOOD AND ENERGY PRICES AS ECONOMIES REOPEN FROM PANDEMIC LOCKDOWNS AND FOLLOWING THE INVASION OF UKRAINE BY MAJOR OIL AND GAS PRODUCER RUSSIA.

interest rate at a fifth straight meeting on Thursday in a bid to cool the pace of price rises.

“Despite weakening economic growth, the Bank of England this week is expected to raise rates further as it seeks to get inflation under control”, said Paul Craig, portfolio manager at Quilter Investors.

“While recession is still a while

away, it is looming on the horizon and its effects will begin to be felt in the UK well before we are officially in one.”

Inflation is being fuelled by soaring food and energy prices as economies reopen from pandemic lockdowns and following the invasion of Ukraine by major oil and gas producer Russia.

“Businesses from all sectors are facing unprecedented rises in raw material costs, soaring energy bills and wage pressures”, David Bharier, head of research at the British Chambers of Commerce, said following Monday’s GDP data.

UK annual inflation stands at nine per cent, the highest level in 40 years, causing a cost-of-living crisis for millions of Britons.

— AFP

Bitcoin hits \$23,794, lowest in 18 months

LONDON: Bitcoin tumbled on Monday to an 18-month low under \$25,000 as investors shunned risky assets in the face of a vicious global markets sell-off, months after the cryptocurrency hit a record high.

The unit took a heavy knock also from news that cryptocurrency lending platform Celsius Network paused withdrawals, citing volatile conditions. World stock markets have plunged since Friday when data showed US inflation at a fresh four-decade high, increasing recession fears and sending investors running for safer assets like the dollar.

“It is not very surprising to see such a strong downturn as we have noticed an increased correlation over the last few years between traditional stocks, which have also tanked recently, and the cryptocurrency market”, noted XTB chief market analyst Walid Koudmani.

The world’s most popular cryptocurrency dived about 10 per cent to hit \$23,794 in morning London deals, striking a level last seen in December 2020. The virtual unit has collapsed by 65 per cent in value since striking a record peak \$68,991.85 in November.

Investors on Monday sought safety with the US central bank seen likely to aggressively ramp up borrowing costs further to combat runaway inflation. Bitcoin’s decline accelerated after the news from Celsius Network.

“Today we are announcing that Celsius is pausing all withdrawals, swap, and transfers between accounts”, the platform said in a statement.

Celsius made the move “due to extreme market conditions”, it added. The total value of customer deposits had already shrunk by more than half to under \$12 billion in May compared with the end of last year. — AFP

Yen slides to 24-year low against dollar

TOKYO: The yen plunged to its lowest level against the dollar since 1998 on Monday as sky-high US inflation fuels a widening monetary policy gap between Japan and the world’s largest economy.

Japan’s currency has been weakening for months, accelerated by the US Federal Reserve’s aggressive monetary tightening to tackle soaring inflation caused by the war in Ukraine and other factors.

But unlike the Fed, the Bank of Japan has said it will stick with its long-standing monetary easing programme which it hopes will lead to stable growth. The increasingly polar policies have strengthened the greenback, and on Monday one dollar bought 135.19 yen.

It’s a level not seen since October 1998 during the Asian currency crisis, and marks a dramatic drop from January rates of around 115 yen per dollar. “The ongoing backdrop to the yen’s fall is the growing gap between long-term interest rates in Japan and the United States”,



Japanese yen and US dollar banknotes are seen in this illustration photo. — AFP

Takahide Kinouchi, Executive Economist at Nomura Research Institute, said in a recent commentary.

And as higher oil prices fuel US inflation, “expectations are growing stronger that aggressive US monetary tightening will continue for the time being, causing US yields to rise further.”

In Japan however, inflation has only just hit the central bank’s long-term target of two per cent.

And while the figure represents a seven-year high, the BoJ sees current inflationary

pressures as temporary, and believes its monetary policy is necessary to produce more long-lasting growth. Questioned in parliament on Monday, central bank Governor Haruhiko Kuroda acknowledged that the yen’s rapid depreciation was “not desirable”.

“The recent rapid depreciation of the yen increases uncertainties and means companies face difficulties in drafting business plans, thus it is negative for the economy and not desirable”, he said. — AFP

Pact signed to kickstart growth of semiconductor industry in Oman

FROM PAGE 13

It will also establish a factory specialised in manufacturing, packaging and exporting semiconductor chips that are used in the manufacture of electronic devices and equipment.

The Ministry of Labour will also finance the training programmes and opportunities created by this programme.

Semiconductors are an essential component in the microchips that power all modern electronic devices, and with the increasing demand for electronic devices globally, the demand for semiconductors will increase, especially since there are many countries facing difficulty in achieving self-sufficiency in chips, as it is expected that the value of the semiconductor industry will reach close to a trillion dollars globally by 2030.

Stalling growth no hindrance for higher commodity prices



OLE S. HANSEN

The commodity sector is showing little sign of global growth and demand worries having a negative impact on prices. In addition, over the past week, the Bloomberg Commodity Sport index — which tracks a basket of major commodities — reached a fresh record high, up 38 per cent on the year.

The sectors doing the heavy lifting remain energy and grains, having delivered year-to-date gains of 102 per cent and 33 per cent respectively.

The industrial metal sector, which slumped by 25 per cent between March and April when Covid-19 outbreaks locked down parts of the Chinese economy,

has made a tentative attempt to recover in recent weeks.

However, news of fresh lockdowns in Shanghai highlights the risk of a slower-than-expected recovery in demand from the world’s biggest consumer of metals. Surging demand for consumer goods during the 2020 to 2021 lockdown period, supported by government handouts and rock bottom interest rates, helped drain the supply of many key commodities from metals to energy.

In addition, we have seen years of plenty supply of key food commodities reverse with adverse weather and the war in Ukraine turbocharging prices led by wheat and edible oils. These, and other developments, have seen inflation surge to the highest levels in 40 years.

As a result, central banks across the world are now hiking rates in order to reduce liquidity and drive down prices through lower activity.

The result is a challenged outlook for global growth — even



in the US where a high frequency GDP tracker monitored by the Federal Reserve is now pointing towards increased risk of zero growth in the second half, potentially resulting in a technical recession which occurs when growth turns negative in two consecutive quarters.

In addition, the World Bank this past week slashed global growth, warning of 1970’s-style stagflation. These developments have naturally raised the question of

when the phenomenal rally in commodities since the 2020 Covid bottom will pause.

Under normal circumstances, elevated commodity prices tend to drive a response from producers in the shape of rising production, which eventually would support lower prices through increased supply.

In addition, the prospect of growth and demand slowing would normally solve the problem of high prices.

Crude oil trades near a three-month high, with the front month contracts of WTI and Brent both trading above \$120 per barrel.

The recent upside extension is being driven by China’s latest attempt to reopen major cities following Covid-19 lockdowns, a development which is likely to increase demand from the world’s biggest importer at a time where the global supply chains remain stretched due to the war in Ukraine.

In addition, the Opec Secretary-General said most members are ‘maxed out’, a comment that helps explain why the recent Opec+ decision to raise production by 50 per cent was ignored by the market in the knowledge the group (already 2.5 million barrel per day below target) will continue to struggle raising production.

Natural gas remains one of the most volatile futures markets, and while some sort of nervous stability has emerged in the European market, the US gas market remains highly volatile with strong hot weather-related demand and

strong export growth not being met by rising production.

As a result, the price of the Henry Hub gas contract reached a 13-year high this past week before temporarily suffering a sharp correction.

This, as after a fire at an LNG export terminal in Quintana, Texas, briefly lowered prices for the fuel in the US while lifting Dutch TTF gas prices from a three-month low.

Gold, rangebound for more than a month traded softer after the US published another strong inflation print at 8.6 per cent, a fresh 40-year high, from 8.3 per cent expected, and after the ECB said it would start raising rates from July, thereby joining other central banks in combating rising inflation.

However, the less hawkish outcome of the meeting helped send the euro lower versus the dollar, thereby adding downward pressure on bullion.

[Ole Hansen in Head of Commodity Strategy at Saxo Bank]

Inflation sped up again, dashing hopes for relief

JEANNA SMIALEK

A surge in prices in May delivered a blow to President Joe Biden and underscored the immense challenge facing the Federal Reserve as inflation, which many economists had expected to show signs of cooling, instead re-accelerated to climb at its fastest pace since late 1981.

Consumer prices rose 8.6 per cent from a year earlier and 1 per cent from April — a monthly increase that was more rapid than economists had predicted and about triple the previous pace. The pickup partly reflected surging gas costs, but even with volatile food and fuel prices stripped out the climb was 0.6 per cent, a brisk monthly rate that matched April’s reading.

Friday’s consumer price index report offered more reason for worry than comfort for Fed officials, who are watching for signs that inflation is cooling on a monthly basis as they try to guide price increases back down to their goal.

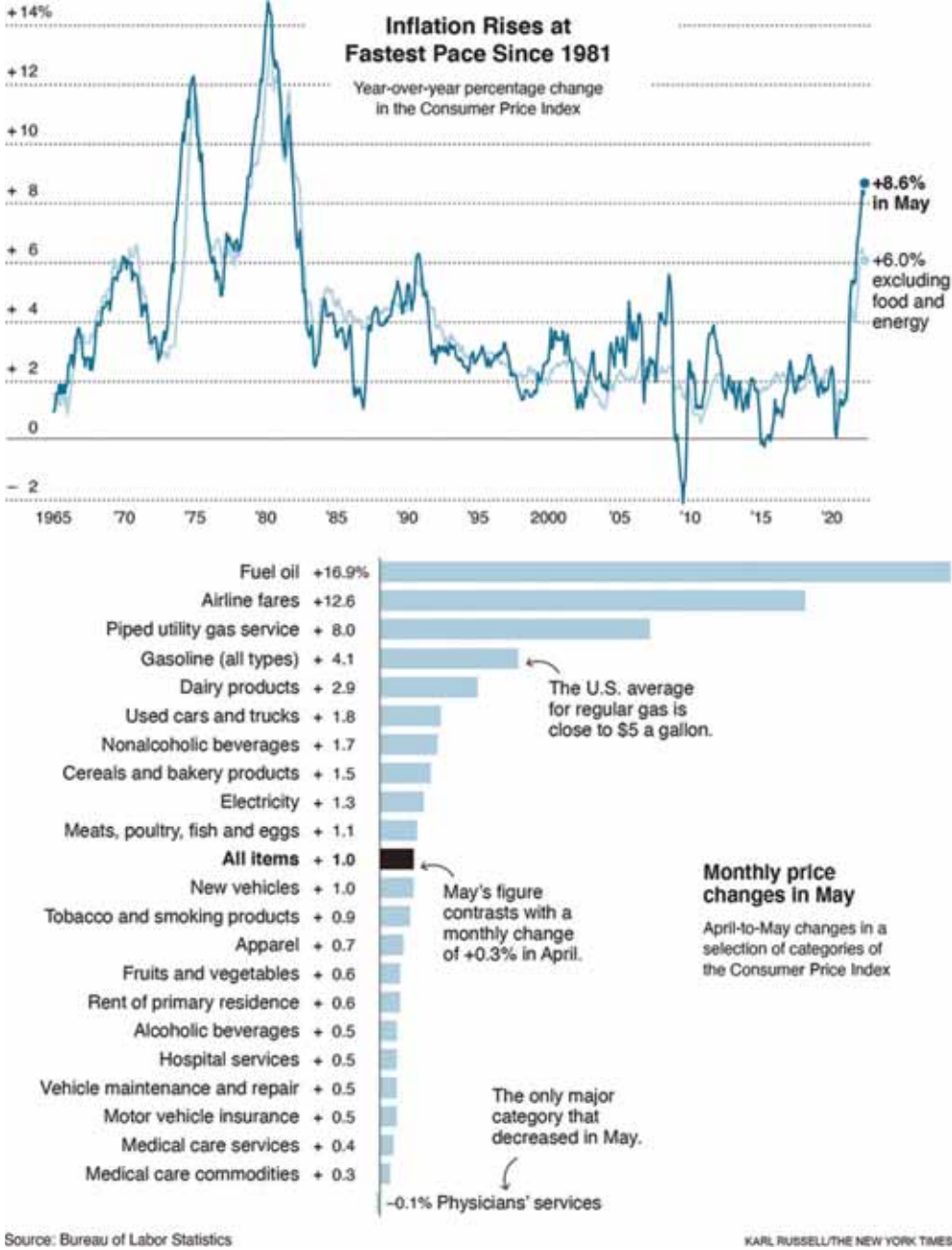
A broad array of products and services, including rents, gas, used cars and food, are becoming sharply more expensive, making this bout of inflation painful for consumers and suggesting that it might have staying power. Policymakers aim for 2 per cent inflation over time using a different but related index, which is also elevated.

The quick pace of inflation increases the odds that the Fed, which is already trying to cool the economy by raising borrowing costs, will have to move more aggressively and inflict some pain to temper consumer and business demand.

The central bank is widely expected to raise rates half a percentage point at its meeting next week and again in July. But Friday’s data prompted a number of economists to pencil in another big rate increase in September. A more active Fed would increase the chances of a marked pullback in growth or even a recession.

“It suggests that the Fed has more to do to bring down inflation,” Laura Rosner-Warburton, a senior economist at MacroPolicy Perspectives, said of the inflation data. “It was strong across the board, not concentrated, and higher than our expectation.”

Markets, nervous about the Fed’s policy path and the rising risk of a downturn, tumbled after the Labour Department released the report. The S&P 500 fell 2.9 per cent. Yields on short-term government bonds, which serve as bench marks for borrowing costs, rose sharply, with the



“My administration will continue to do everything we can to lower prices for the American people. We all have work to do to get inflation down.”

JOE BIDEN
US PRESIDENT

rate on the two-year treasury note hitting 3.06 per cent, its highest level since 2008.

Economists warn that wrestling inflation lower could be a slow and painful process. Production and shipping snarls tied to the pandemic have shown early signs of easing but remain pronounced, keeping products like cars and trucks in short supply.

The war in Ukraine is elevating food and fuel prices, and its trajectory is unpredictable. And consumer demand remains strong, buoyed by savings amassed during the pandemic and wages that are rising robustly, albeit not enough to fully offset inflation.

“Inflation remains unrelenting — consumers continue to get hit from all sides,” said Sarah Watt House, a senior economist at Wells Fargo. “There is very little inflation relief in sight.”

In a statement after the release, Biden said the numbers underlined why inflation is a top priority of his, while emphasising

that prices are increasing around the world. “My administration will continue to do everything we can to lower prices for the American people,” he said in the statement. “We all have work to do to get inflation down.”

But controlling inflation is primarily the Fed’s job, and Friday’s numbers increased speculation that the Fed might raise rates by 0.75 percentage points in the months ahead — even though important Fed policymakers have shown little appetite for such a drastic move.

“We think the US central bank now has good reason to surprise markets by hiking more aggressively than expected in June,” economists at Barclays wrote after the release.

The chorus of speculation illustrated just how grim the consumer price news was, especially paired with evidence that inflation expectations are increasing. A measure of where households expect prices to be five years from now hit its

highest reading since 2008 in preliminary data released on Friday.

Fed officials are likely to carefully parse Friday’s report for hints at what might come next. A chunk of the May price acceleration owed to a continued pickup in key goods prices. Costs for pre-owned vehicles, which economists had been expecting to moderate or even decline, instead rose sharply and were up 16.1 per cent from a year earlier. New car prices were up 12.6 per cent.

The jump was also driven by pandemic-affected industries like travel. People have been taking vacations with a vengeance after years stuck at home, and airfares were up 37.8 per cent from a year earlier. Hotel stays cost 22.2 per cent more than last May.

Rents are still rising sharply, and a rent-tied measure of housing costs for people who own their homes accelerated. Housing indexes make up about one-third of overall inflation and generally move slowly, so they could put continued pressure on inflation in the months ahead.

In fact, a recent jump in rents on new leases tracked by private data providers means housing costs will probably continue to climb for some time, as renters renew or move and face higher market costs. There is also a risk that higher mortgage rates will prevent people from buying homes, keeping a squeeze on apartment supply.

“The rental market feels very tight: Vacancies are very low, and because of that rents are raising at a strong clip,” said Igor Popov, chief economist at Apartment List.

Overall, the report was a discouraging one for policymakers, and it highlighted that they have their work cut out for them as consumer and business demand remains strong.

While the White House has been instituting policies that might help families with inflation around the edges by improving supply or offsetting costs — like trying to clear up port backlogs, or releasing strategic petroleum reserves to mute gas price increases — the task of cooling down consumption falls almost entirely to the central bank.

So far, spending shows little sign of cracking. Even as vacation costs jump off the charts, for instance, travellers continue to book trips.

“The resilience of travel is really remarkable,” Anthony G Capuano, CEO of Marriott International, said during a Tuesday event with analysts, later adding that the hotel company is seeing “extraordinary pricing power.”

Food export bans in Asia prompt fears of more protectionism

MIKE IVES

As Russia’s war of Ukraine helped push global agricultural prices to soaring heights, some Asian governments restricted the export of products they viewed as essential to domestic food security.

For Indonesia it was cooking oil. For India, wheat. And for Malaysia, chickens.

The bans have a political logic: Leaders do not want to be blamed for allowing staple commodities to be sold abroad at the expense of low-income consumers at home.

But the bans risk hurting farmers and producers, and one concern is that the current cycle of protectionism could lead to restrictions on other food exports — including rice, a primary food for more than half the world’s population. That concern was amplified last month, when an official from Thailand said the country was considering setting up a rice price pact with Vietnam, another major rice exporter, to help the two nations boost their “bargaining power.”

“That’s the problem with this stuff: Once someone starts closing a border, other countries think, ‘Oh, maybe we need to close our borders, too,’ and the whole flow of food stops,” said Richard Skinner, a Singapore-based food security specialist for accounting firm PwC.

“And when the flow of food stops,” he added, “it actually makes the initial problem worse.”

The bans’ effects are already being felt by consumers.

In Singapore, the government urged residents to switch to alternative meats and frozen chicken in response to the ban in neighbouring Malaysia. But that was scant consolation for the owners of Ah Five Hainanese Chicken Rice, a hawker stall that sells Malaysian chicken.

For now, the stall’s owners have raised their prices and expanded into other dishes, but they have a “shaky feeling” about the near future, said one of them, Natalie Lee.

“Switching to a new menu also means entering into a new market that we are unsure of,” Lee, 30, said in a Facebook message.

Global food supplies have been disrupted by not only the war in Ukraine, but also by the coronavirus pandemic, recent bouts of extreme weather, and rising energy and fertiliser prices. In the Asia Pacific region, those pressures threaten hundreds of millions of poor people who spend a high percentage of their incomes on basic commodities like rice and wheat.

In April, Indonesia, the world’s largest producer of palm oil, suspended exports of the crop to try to ease rising prices of cooking oil at home. Prices of vegetable oils globally had surged after the war caused Ukraine’s sunflower oil exports to crater. The Indonesian government reversed its ban less than a month later.

Last month, India banned wheat exports, with some exceptions, in the wake of an extraordinary heat wave that had severely damaged the domestic wheat harvest. The Commerce Ministry said the ban was necessary because a spike in the crop’s price, “arising out of many factors,” was threatening India’s food security.

Global food supplies have been disrupted by not only the war in Ukraine, but also by the coronavirus pandemic, recent bouts of extreme weather, and rising energy and fertiliser prices. In the Asia Pacific region, those pressures threaten hundreds of millions of poor people who spend a high percentage of their incomes on basic commodities like rice and wheat

This month, Malaysia suspended chicken exports, much of which go to Singapore. Officials said last month it was an effort to give domestic prices and farmers’ production costs — which had been driven up by the price rise in corn and soybeans — a chance to stabilise.

“The government’s priority is our own people,” Prime Minister Ismail Sabri Yaakob of Malaysia said at the time.

Such export bans sometimes help reduce domestic prices of the commodities in question, analysts say. They may also make political sense to leaders concerned about the public backlash from price surges that pinch the budgets of low-income city dwellers.

But the bans also have clear downsides, and it is not clear that they help in the long run. One obvious risk is that export bans by countries that rely heavily on food imports could prompt neighbours to retaliate, analysts say. Another is that a country that imposes an export ban could be blocking domestic farmers from accessing lucrative export markets.

India’s wheat ban, for example, was welcomed by urban consumers as a check on rising food prices but was unpopular with farmers who lost the opportunity to cash in further on record-high wheat prices, according to a recent analysis by Cullen S Hendrix, a professor of international studies at the University of Denver.

In Indonesia, President Joko Widodo is almost certainly aware that the price of cooking oil has figured prominently in public surveys of his performance, said Bhima Yudhistira Adinegara, director of the Center of Economic and Law Studies, a think tank in the capital, Jakarta. So his export ban made sense for “political reasons.” “The government has to do something, or it will be seen as dysfunctional,” he said.

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The chronicles of old and new Oman through a Dutch geologist's photographs

Erik van Scherpenzeel is a retired Dutch geologist and photographer who has painstakingly documented the early stages of life in Oman. His book 'OMAN, Then and Now' is based on his love for the country and offered his exceptional collection as a special gift to the Omani ambassador in The Netherlands. The book offers some rare insights into how Oman was during his stay which he terms 'special.' Read all about how he witnessed the early phase of transition into a modern state in rare images... **P20**



Britney Spears: The Once and Future Versace Muse

THE DRESS WAS LONG. It was white. It was Versace. And it wasn't just a wedding dress.

Well, it was, literally, a wedding dress — the dress Britney Spears wore to marry Sam Asghari on June 9 in Los Angeles. But it was also a symbol of Spears' new era of independence, and a relatively restrained choice for a woman who has lived a lot of her pain, and her fame, in public. While it may be her third marriage, it's the first since the end of the conservatorship that defined a large part of her adult life. So why not dress for it as if it is a fresh start?

Not so much a fairy tale ending as a beginning, in off-the-shoulder ivory silk cady with pearl buttons down the back, a high slit to free the leg, a nearly 15-foot flowing veil and a matching choker — a nod of sorts to her own 1990s trendset-

ting self.

And for that, why not turn to a designer who knew her when? Enter Donatella Versace.

Back in March, Spears posted a picture of herself with Versace on Instagram, suggesting that the two of them were peas in a pod (in somewhat saltier language). Versace, in turn, told Variety later in the month that Spears was "in an amazing state of mind."

Indeed, the wedding may have consecrated Spears' relationship with Asghari, but her relationship with Versace has been going on for decades. The two women have long had more in common than a pop-tastic aesthetic, a love of body-conscious clothing, bleach and a bit of a spray tan.

Versace, after all, went through her own public trial by fire when she was

forced to assume the reins of the Versace brand after the murder of her brother Gianni. She endured substance abuse issues and family trauma to keep the business going no matter what. (Sound familiar?) She knows something about being stuck under the celebrity microscope.

Perhaps as a result, she and Spears have had each other's backs since at least 2001, when Spears chose a backless green chiffon minidress with black beading to perform with Michael Jackson at Madison Square Garden. In 2002, Spears wore a rainbow-toned, flesh-flashing Versace gown to sit in the front row at the Versace show during Milan Fashion Week, and in 2008 she wore two different sparkling Versace minidresses to the MTV Video Music Awards.

Versace once even defined her clothes according to Spears' reputation. They are "young and rock 'n' roll," she said of the looks in her spring 2003 collection. "Britney things."

After the nuptials, there were more Versace "Britney things," including an assortment of minidresses in black and red that Spears wore to the reception and dance party.

And together the wedding wardrobe suggests there may be even more Britney-related inspiration come



September and the next Versace runway. It's not hard to imagine that this could be the start of a whole new Spears-Versace era (not to mention ambassadorship), one that defines the look of a

certain unapologetic and triumphant feminine survivalism.

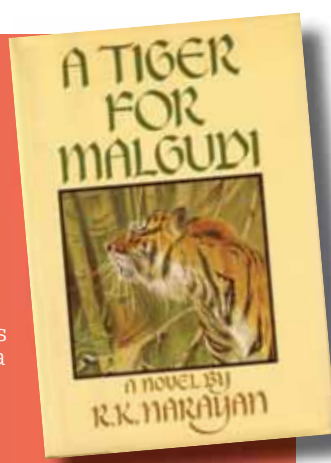
If so, it would mark a fashion marriage of the most enduring, and authentic, kind. — NYT

READ

A TIGER FOR MALGUDI

BY RK NARAYAN

The tiger recounts his story of capture by a circus owner, but he never tried to escape. He lived freely in the wild jungles of India in his youth. He mates and has a litter with a tigress, and raises a litter until one day he finds that hunters have captured and killed his entire family.



FASHION TRENDS

Models present creations by Shine He Sang during a fashion show entitled 'Unbound', showcasing final pieces by the graduating class of the Fashion Design MFA programme, at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. — AFP



AUCTION

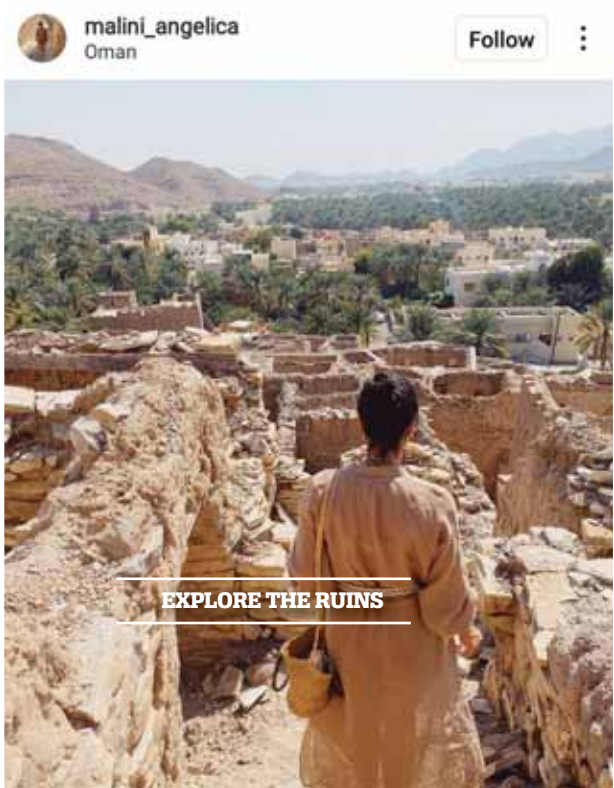
A photograph shows part of the personal collection of late French fashion designer Hubert de Givenchy displayed prior to the auction at Christie's auction house in Paris. — AFP





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AROUND THE WORLD

CONSERVATION

Far from home, new chance in Mexico for Frida the rescued 'pet' tiger



AS A TINY cub four years ago, Frida the Bengal tiger was found chained up in a restaurant parking lot in Mexico City, dirty, emaciated and unable to walk. Rescued and rehabilitated, she is now a popular attraction at the Reino Animal (Animal Kingdom) park along with hundreds of other exotic creatures taken from misguided Mexican "pet" owners — including showy drug traffickers.

Far from the Asian forests where she belongs, Frida has made a full recovery and "no longer suffers," said park employee Agustin Bastida as the tigress gave a big yawn.

Lying on a grassy patch she looked disinterestedly at the humans ogling her from the other side of a fence.

Frida is one of six big cats among 1,100 animals — 40 per cent of them rescued exotic creatures — at the park in Otumba, northeast of the Mexican capital. Fellow residents include zebras, giraffes, wolves and a variety of birds.

According to authorities, some 150 to 200 exotic animals are seized in Mexico City every year, often after reports from neighbours.

Some of the worst culprits are drug lords such as Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, who had a pet monkey called "Boots."

In one major rescue in 2007, officials busting a "narco-mansion" found two jaguars, two tigers, two lions and a macaque, according to Lucio Garcia Gil, head of the PROFEPA environmental crimes office for Mexico City.

"There are many exotic birds, such as macaws or parrots, reptiles, many primates and big cats; it is what we have most detected that people have," he said. Two big cats were rescued in the megacity in 2021 and four — including a lion cub — so far this year.

\$5,000 FOR A LION

According to Gil, a tiger or lion sells for between \$1,000 and \$5,000 on the Mexican black market.

Mexican law allows people to legally purchase exotic animals from registered dealers "as long as they keep them safe and provide the appropriate protection," he said.

"Unfortunately... hardly anybody complies with the conditions," he said.

Illegal possession is punishable by up to nine years in prison or a fine of up to \$15,000, though Gil said he could not remember anyone ever going to jail. Keeping a big cat is expensive — they can eat as much as 30 kilograms (66 pounds) of meat per day, and many private owners abandon the animals in the end.

Like lions or jaguars, Bengals — which grow to stand over a meter tall and can weigh as much as 260 kilograms (570 pounds) — are not easy housemates and many have their fangs and claws removed so that they do not destroy their surroundings, or owners.

THEY ARE NOT PETS

According to the UN Environment Programme, global wildlife trafficking generates as much as \$23 billion per year.

It is the seventh-most lucrative illicit business, according to the Washington-based Global Financial Integrity. In Mexico City, the lucky trafficked animals that do get rescued are taken to zoos and parks such as the 53-hectare (130-acre) Animal Kingdom north-east of the capital.

In Frida's case, she was brought in with a broken hip, which has since completely healed.

"She could not walk, it was very sad, very sad," said Bastida. "People buy these animals to keep them as pets, but they are not pets," he added.

"They have to be in the wild or in open spaces where the conditions are adequate for a good quality of life." — **AFP**

ANIMAL PLANET

'Soul relief': Bees help mentally ill on Greek island



ON A HILLSIDE overlooking the azure blue waters of Greece's Leros island harbour, a small group of workers in protective gear are busy smoking beehives.

But these are not ordinary beekeepers. Some of them are patients from the nearby psychiatric hospital, participating in a two-decade project combining therapy with professional fulfilment.

The social cooperative in Leros, housed in a former barracks known as the Caserma estate, is the first of its kind in Greece, explains project manager Andreas Georgiou.

The cooperative "aims to socially and professionally integrate persons with psychosocial problems", he tells.

"Through the programme... they acquire self-respect and self-esteem," he says. On the fields of the estate, patients care for the bees and cultivate their high-quality diet — lavender, oregano and other aromatic herbs.

"This is a bee's paradise," says Georgiou, an occupational therapist and president of the Dodecanese social cooperative (KOISPE), which runs the estate.

In Lepida, to the south of

the port, the employees package and label the honey, and dry the herbs in dedicated rooms inside the psychiatric hospital.

The estate produce is then sold in various locations on the island.

"I love what I do here, it's a real relief for the soul," says Artemis, a patient in his 60s as he seals honey jars.

"We try to be as traditional and pure here as possible," he adds, briefly switching into salesman mode.

The Leros cooperative employs 13 salaried workers, supervised by specialist beekeepers, in addition to a team of nurses and occupational therapists from the island's psychiatric hospital.

Leros is an island with a rich history going back to antiquity, and the site of a major World War II battle that later inspired war epic "The Guns of Navarone".

Among other islands of the Dodecanese group, it was occupied by Italy for more than 30 years, giving rise to fascist-era rationalist architecture that is unique to the area.

But the island's modern image is closely associated with the local mental asylum, which was the scene of a major scandal involving the

serious neglect of patients in the early 1990s.

Immense' therapeutic gain

Georgiou says it was precisely the shock of the scandal that prompted the reforms which gave rise to the cooperative.

"The reforms launched more than 20 years ago radically changed the way patients are treated, with a view to de-institutionalising asylums," adds Giannis Loukas, a former director of the Leros psychiatric centre.

The therapeutic gain for patients is "immense", he notes.

They can also enjoy the rights of employees instead of working illegally, as was the case for a long time in Leros and elsewhere in Greece, he adds.

While some patients live in the asylum, a large number are allowed to live in flats on the island for better integration into society, Loukas adds.

Georgiou notes that a handful of people have been able to make a full rehabilitation through the cooperative. One is working as an assistant plumber in Leros, while another is working in a hotel in Rhodes, he said. — **AFP**

A WINDOW INTO CONTEMPORARY OMANI LITERATURE



Dr Khalid Mohammed al Balushi
khalidalbalushi@hotmail.com

Dog's Ears Barbecued in the 60s

THE FOLLOWING is my English translation of an excerpt from "A Soldier from Oman: Memory's Nectar" by (ret.) Inspector-General Said bin Rashid al Kalbani

DOG'S EARS BARBECUED, SEASONED WITH CHILLI!

In the evening, we would go out to the plains to graze our cattle, while in the morning the person hired to take care of the cattle would do that. Everybody would pay as per the number of the cattle he had.

We used to take dogs with us to help us in guarding and tracing our cattle on return. Since most of the cattle were black, people preferred to raise black dogs, so that they could easily be distinguished from any usually red-coloured wolves and foxes coming close to the cattle. In addition to that, they were used for the then-allowed hunting. When we hit our prey with a bullet, the dog would run and seize it. The best type for hunting purposes was Soliqi, which would run faster than a deer.

We used to have a hunting dog known as marqab, mainly black but with white streaks here and there. Our father took good care of this faithful animal. It was once injured by a bullet and we treated it with ashes for no less than a year. Our treatment was, nonetheless, of no avail, as it died of the injury.

On a side note, it was believed then that if a dog ran long distances it would urinate under trees or over stones far from each other, and on return, it would chase its route by smelling its own urine. I perhaps should also mention, that strange as it may appear, we used to cut dogs' ears when they were small, burn them, and season them with chilli and salt. We then made them eat their own barbecued ears, so they would cry and bark more fiercely than usual.

SHOOTING: KANAD FURTHERS DISTANCES

Shooting is an age-old original Omani sport that we all take pride in. We used to buy bullets from Ibri or Al Khabourah. Bullets plates were melted and poured into moulds of stone. As regards gun-powder, it used to be a urea-like white material. It would be cooked and then left open, so the water would dry up. The remains were subsequently mixed with sulphur and the coal of the shakhr tree. The mixture would then be ground and sprinkled with a little water. We would try it with fire to see its power. If it was weak, we would add more till we got it to the level of the power we wanted.

We would measure its power when we saw how thoroughly it had been baked without leaving any trace on the palm of the hand. The cartridge would be retrieved and recharged with the appropriate numbers of match-sticks. For bird hunting, for example, a small amount would be used, and for deer hunting the quantity would be increased. The same was the case with distant targets. We would prepare for two shots per day, and sometime, perhaps for three. We hunted doves, birds and foxes. The latter we had no problem eating. We would cook them with garlic and dry lemon. However, the elders didn't eat them, and even went so far as not to allow us cook them at home.

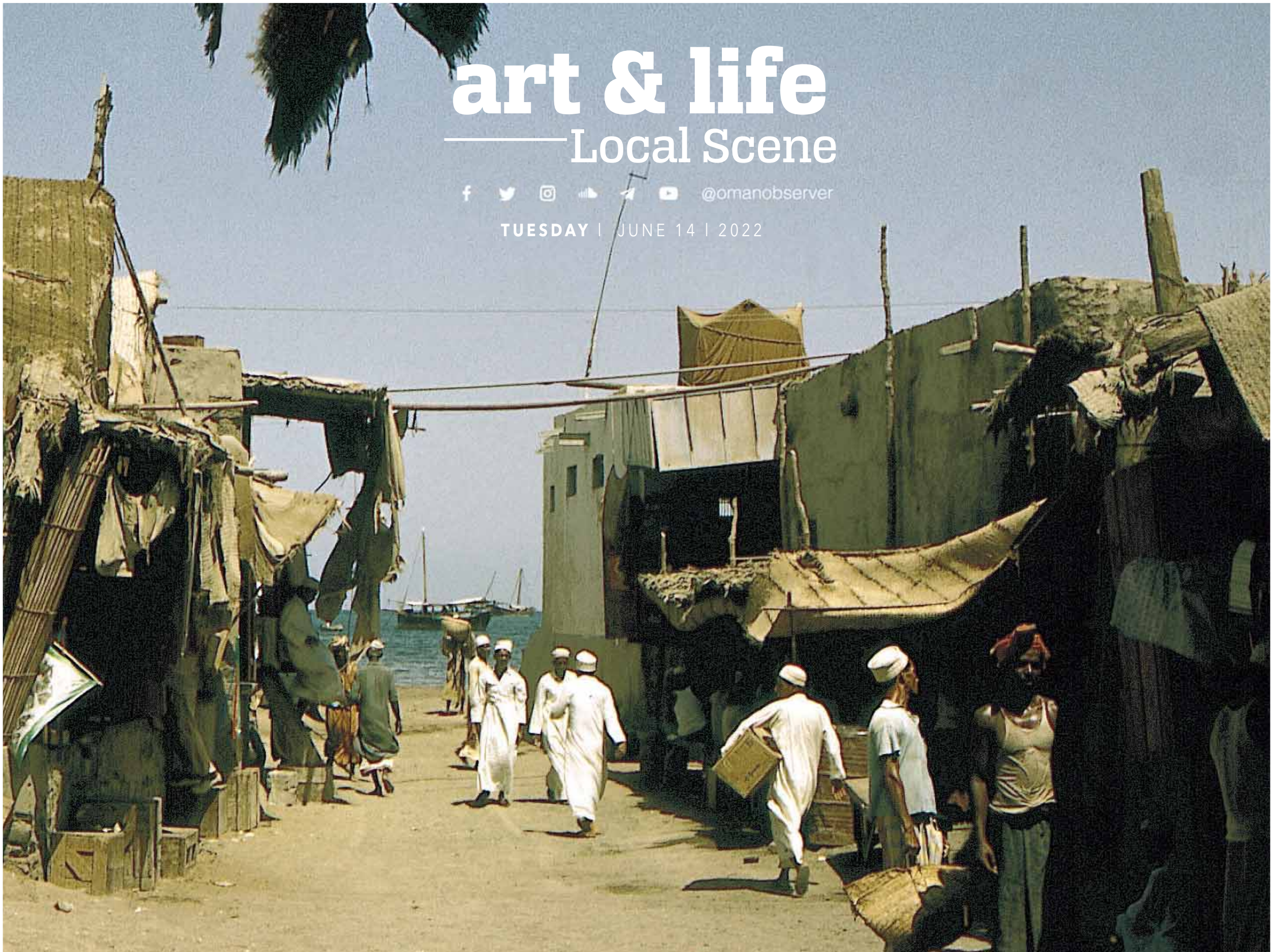
We used to gather in the evening in a place known as shareeaa, the place the falaj went through and was normally in front of a mountain. Every one of us would be carrying a rifle and would compete in the shooting. The target, shabah, would be set on a mountain. After the inception of the Kanad 303 rifle, we extended the shooting range. There were no awards for such activities. Competent in shooting, we did all that with pleasure to maintain a tradition.

art & life

Local Scene

f t i y @omanobserver

TUESDAY | JUNE 14 | 2022



The chronicle of old and new Oman through a Dutch geologist's photographs

By Liju Cherian
Twitter: @lijucherianoman

Not many know that Oman used to be called 'Sultanate of Muscat and Muscat' and changed to Sultanate of Oman in late 1970 or the official flag was pure red or the custom border at Ruwi between Oman and Muscat, the number plates were red, and that there were no paved roads in Oman except for a small stretch from Bait Al Falaj via Riyam pass to Muscat.

Or the funny fact was the gate at Bab Al Kabir closed at 6 pm and if you were still inside, had to carry a lantern.

All these are listed by Erik van Scherpenzeel, a retired geologist and a dedicated photographer from The Netherlands who worked in Oman from 1970 to 1974 and first-hand witnessed and documented the early stages of the Renaissance.

Erik recalls his first job as a well-site geologist at the Al Huwaisa field (discovered in 1969) where he supervised the coring of the Shuaiba oil reservoir, followed by assignments at the drilling of the refine wells at the Yibal-14 blowout.

For entertainment, he mentions that at least twice a week, movies were shown outside projected on the side of a large white caravan. These movies came from the British Army and were so modern that often they saw them before their first night showing in Europe.

He delves deep into the 70s era when he was an area geologist for South Oman and as an operation geologist thereby involved in the new oil discoveries in the Gaba area (1972-73). Until then oil had only been found in Cretaceous limestones, however, at Ghaba North oil was found in the Permo-Carboniferous sandstones. This was quickly followed up with discoveries in Saih Nihaydah and Saih Rawl, he recalls with new oil finds in Dhofar at Amal.

From the middle of 1973 until his transfer to Brunei in September 1974,

Erik worked as a seismic interpreter. He left Oman from Seeb Airport where just a few days before, a Concorde had landed during its maiden flight.

Erik and his wife Carla van Scherpenzeel re-visited Oman for the first time in 1996 and seeing the massive changes he decided to compile a book showing the differences between the late 60s-early 70s ('Then' theme) and late 90s early 2000 ('Now' theme). PDO Ltd was approached for assistance, which was readily granted. He did so many journeys throughout the country to retake the scenes originally captured. This resulted in the publication of the book 'OMAN, 'Then and Now'', with a foreword from Dr Mohammed bin Hamad al Rumhy, Minister of Energy and Minerals, in conjunction with the 30th National Day celebrations in 2000.

Erik says that he was able to document a large number of scenes and landmarks of the governorates during his stay in the Sultanate of Oman in the early 70s. His work reflects the social, cultural and heritage of the country, in addition to its geographical, topographical and geological features.

"Life in the Sultanate of Oman was marvellous and Omani people were gentle, sociable and truthful in their friendship," recalls Erik, noting that one could move freely in the fascinating landscape and that one could even sleep safely amidst the golden dunes.

He still remembers his visit to Sur and the long trip to the easterly wilayat from Muscat on a four-wheel vehicle on the rough roads. Everywhere he went, he could observe Omani people's devotion and sound Arabian habits and traditions of hospitality.

Oman was special in all the postings he had because he saw it as it had been for centuries and witnessed the early phase of transition into a modern state.

"Progress has been phenomenal, yet I regret the loss of some of the cultural heritage and traditional values," he adds.

Erik is nostalgic about many inci-

dents which he encountered during his stay. He remembers the trip with a dhow to the Daymaniyat Islands which was an experience to be cherished. They camped on the beach but were woken up by just hatched turtles crawling beneath. Even though it was still dark, gulls were arriving in great numbers to feast on the hatchlings. They could scare off most of the gulls by using torches and other means and were able to guide many hatchlings to safety.

With a doctorate in Geology from Leiden University, he joined Shell and in a long career which saw him retire in 1999 after working in Oman, Brunei, New Zealand, the UK, Nigeria and The Netherlands.

Erik recently offered his exceptional collection as a special gift to the Sultanate of Oman, based on his deep love for the country and on his keenness to enrich its national archives.

Dr Abdullah bin Salim al Harthy, Oman's Ambassador to the Netherlands, visited Erik at his home in Groningen, a city in the northern part of The Netherlands, and thanked him for the gift he presented and expressed his gratitude for the humanitarian gesture.

Says Dr Al Harthy, "Many things struck me as I entered Erik's home as every corner is adorned with an image from Oman. Not only that, his study room is bedecked with historical paintings, books, mementoes and even old rifles. Erik also painstakingly made accounts of Omani villages and countryside in such detail that gave me the impression that I was listening to an academic in Omani history and civilisation and this is documented in photographs."

Erik last visited Oman in November 2018 and the couple used to travel every three years but the pandemic halted their plans. In fact, he met his wife in Oman way back in 1972. Erik lives a retired life reminiscing about his life in Oman and actively pursues driving his vintage Morgan which he ordered in 1972.

