

OMAN
VISION 2040
WILL BE EXECUTED
IN FOUR
CONSECUTIVE
PLANS BEGINNING
WITH THE TENTH
FIVE-YEAR
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN

JOB SECURITY
FUND (JSF) SET UP
TO WHICH HIS
MAJESTY THE
SULTAN DONATES
RO 10 MILLION AS
SEED MONEY AND
ENCOURAGES
SOCIETY TO
PARTICIPATE AT
A LATER STAGE

SEVERAL
DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS IN
DIFFERENT
GOVERNORATES
TO THE TUNE OF
RO 371 MILLION
INITIATED

THE MINISTRY
OF HOUSING
AND URBAN
PLANNING WILL
HELP PREPARE
FOR THE DISTRI-
BUTION OF 23,000
PLOTS ACROSS
GOVERNORATES



OMAN
HOUSING BANK
BUDGET RAISED
TO RO 100 MILLION,
WHICH WILL HELP
IT TO GIVE HOME
LOANS TO 2,250
CITIZENS FROM
1,350. THE STEP
WILL SHORTEN
CITIZENS'
WAIT IN
OBTAINING
HOUSING LOANS

STEMMING FROM
HIS MAJESTY'S
KEENNESS
TO BOOST
EDUCATIONAL
SECTOR, ROYAL
DIRECTIVES WERE
GIVEN TO FINANCE
CONSTRUCTION OF
6 SCHOOLS
AT A COST OF
RO 8.85MILLION

OMAN
INVESTMENT
AUTHORITY
MARKS
A SIGNIFICANT
STEP THAT WILL
CERTAINLY
CONTRIBUTE TO
AUGMENTING
INVESTMENT
REVENUES AND
IMPROVING THE
SULTANATE'S
CREDIT STATUS

NEW RENAISSANCE BEGINS

MUSCAT: On Monday, the Sultanate will begin a new year of its renewed Renaissance under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, who ascended to the throne on January 11, 2020. On this occasion, the government and people of the Sultanate affirm allegiance and loyalty to His Majesty who has set his sight on reinforcing the Sultanate's status among the nations and maintaining its national interests in accordance with the goals and paths of which were identified by the Oman

Vision 2040 which seeks to achieve qualitative changes in all spheres of life. Since the very first day of his rule, His Majesty confirmed his sincere endeavour to set up a new phase of Oman's renewed Renaissance that meets with the requirements of the upcoming period and fulfils the aspirations of the Omani people as well as preserve the achievements that took place over the past five decades. His Majesty the Sultan has over the past months taken a number of steps and procedures needed for the

implementation of the Oman Vision 2040 which was launched at the beginning of January 2021 and will be executed in four consecutive plans beginning with 10th Five-Year Development Plan (2021-2025). **BALANCED DEVELOPMENT** This plan has drawn up ambitious and clear-cut national goals linked to executive programmes that seek to restore momentum to economic growth and achieve balanced socio-economic development under the Royal guidance

and directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. The Oman Vision 2040 is based on four main pillars. The first pillar comprises education, scientific research and skills, health and citizenship, identity, heritage, national culture, well-being and social security and youth empowerment. The second pillar consists of 'an economy with competitive climate, economic management, economic diversification, financial sustainability, labour market and employment, investment and the

private sector, international cooperation, development of governorates and sustainable cities and IT technology. The third pillar is environment with sustainable resources. The fourth pillar is a state with responsible authorities related to the legislation, judiciary, oversight, governance of the administrative apparatus and resources and projects. All these pillars are in line with the strategic orientation towards a society proud of its identity and culture and committed to citizenship.

Cold wave to end today

STAFF REPORTER

MUSCAT, JAN 9

Even as the current spell of the cold wave is expected to end by Sunday, Saiq in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate reported sub-zero temperatures (-0.9) on Friday. An official at Oman Meteorology said, "This spell of the cold wave will end on Sunday and the temperatures are expected to increase 5 degrees in the plains and two to three degrees in the mountains." The sudden drop in temperature led people to venture out in thick winter clothes.

Another spell of a cold wave is expected by the next weekend, but a clear picture will emerge only in the coming days.

Freezing water in wadis and at homes were reported from several places in Jabal Akhdhar.

Temperatures in Muscat were said to be between 20 degrees (maximum) and 12 degrees Celsius (minimum) on Friday.

Places such as Yankul (3.8) and Bidiya (5.5) figured among places with low temperatures on Friday. The neighbouring countries of UAE and Saudi Arabia also witnessed a remarkable drop in mercury levels.

Garbage bags exempted

STAFF REPORTER

MUSCAT, JAN 9

The Environment Authority has issued a statement on alternatives for single-use plastic bags and some of the exemptions.

The bags covered by the ban are lightweight single-consumption plastic shopping bags and all kinds of decomposing bags, which are capable of disintegrating and disintegrating quickly in nature, but their chemical properties remain and as a result, the harm

is greater on the environment.

The alternatives are paper and carton bags, canvas bags, cotton bags, and non-woven bags that are reused and available in the markets and shops.

Bags currently allowed are the ones used for waste collection, bags for planting agricultural seedlings, bags for vegetables and fruits available in commercial centres, bags for meat and fish available in commercial centres, laundry bags, and bread packaging bags.

SAF MUSEUM DISPLAYS HEARSE OF SULTAN QABOOS



MUSCAT: The Sultan's Armed Forces Museum has got the honour of displaying the Land Rover and the cannon cart that carried the body of late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos. The SAF Museum also obtained an original copy of the letter written by His Majesty and addressed to the Royal family council through the Defence Council, which contained the name of his successor. Besides, the SAF Museum displays the Saidi aumama (turban) and Khanjar (dagger) at the Sultan Qaboos Hall at the premises of SAF Museum in Bait Al Falaj Fort.

- ONA

Around 15,000 people vaccinated in Sultanate

VINOD NAIR

@vinot_nair

More and more people are visiting health centres to get vaccinated, according to official sources.

As of January 9, 14,980 people have got vaccinated of whom 5,516 of them were from Muscat, followed by 2,547 in North Al Batinah and 1,296 in South Al Batinah.

Following the first batch of Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine (15,600 doses) that arrived on December 24, the second batch of 28,000 doses are expected in the coming days.

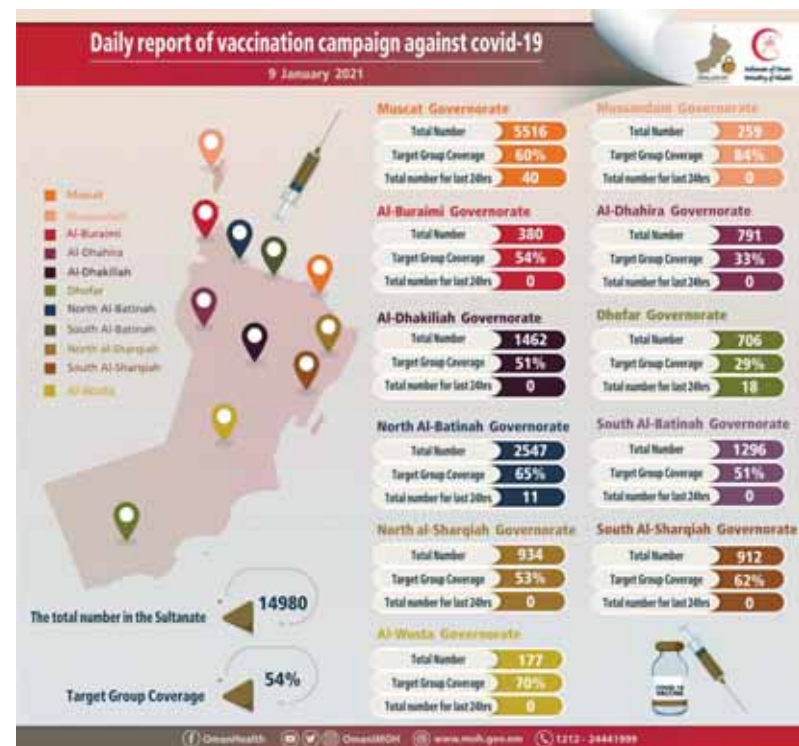
Oman has also joined the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunisation (COVAX), which will provide 10 per cent of the required COVID-19 vaccine.

COVID-19 vaccine deliveries under the Covax facility coordinated by the World Health Organization to support lower-income countries could start this month, WHO immunisation director Kate O'Brien said on Thursday.

"We need about \$7 billion in order to deliver enough vaccine to these countries through the end of 2021. The facility has already raised about \$6 billion of the \$7 billion," she said.

"So the facility has access to over two billion doses of vaccine. We will start to deliver those vaccines probably by the end of January, and if not, then certainly by early February and mid-February.

According to government sources, COVID-19 recovered people will be offered vaccines in the later phases, and the side



effects, if any, will be noticed only after seven days. So far no side effects have been reported in the country.

Total coverage of the target groups has been in North Al Batinah (65%), Muscat (60%), South Al Batinah (51%) and Musandam (84%).

The government has urged both citizens and residents in target groups to take advantage of the available COVID-19 doses by visiting the nearest health centres specified by the ministry for this purpose.

Officials at Bausher polyclinic told the *Observer* that they receive around 100 to 150 residents and citizens daily for vaccination.

"Currently, citizens and residents 65 years and above with chronic diseases are given priorities," an employee at the clinic said.

"Both citizens and residents

should visit the nearest health institutions designated for giving the vaccine across the Sultanates' Governorates without adhering to the scheduled appointments for taking the vaccine depending upon the working hours in each institution," said the ministry.

"A person can be said vaccinated only after taking the second dose. So the coverage rate should include only those vaccinated with two doses," said a citizen.

Target groups identified by the government are senior citizens (65 years of age and above), those with diabetes, people with kidney failure and who are on dialysis, and those with chronic lung diseases namely, the Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Syndrome (COPD), asthma (with the severity of the disease varies between medium and high), and interstitial lung disease (ILD).



ZAKAT AL-SEEB COMMITTEE
UNDER SUPERVISION OF MINISTRY
OF ENDOWMENTS & RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS





THE FIRST ENDOWMENT FOR THE ZAKAT AL-SEEB COMMITTEE
DEDICATED FOR THE NEEDY AND UNDERPRIVILEGED PEOPLE
THE COLLECTED FUNDS ARE ALLOCATED FOR INSOLVENT FAMILIES AND VARIOUS CHARITIES PROJECTS

ABU HURAIRAH (MAY ALLAH BE PLEASED WITH HIM) REPORTED:
THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH (ﷺ) SAID, "WHEN A MAN DIES, HIS DEEDS COME TO AN END EXCEPT FOR THREE THINGS: SADAQAH JARIYAH (CEASELESS CHARITY); A KNOWLEDGE WHICH IS BENEFICIAL, OR A VIRTUOUS DESCENDANT WHO PRAYS FOR HIM (FOR THE DECEASED)."

THE ENDOWMENT AMOUNT: 600,000 OMR
NUMBER OF SHARES: 20000
PRICE PER SHARE: 30 OMR

We Accept Cash & In-Kind Donations

Contribute On Al-Meethaq Account:
0624500673530001
Zakat Seeb Waqf

لجنة الزكاة بولاية السيب
www.zakatseeb.net
zakatseeb@gmail.com

92475055 – 24265900
97538307 - 97545354

zakatseeb1

NEW RENAISSANCE BEGINS

FROM PAGE 1

10TH FIVE-YEAR PLAN
The 10th Five-Year Development Plan is based on the mechanisms and programmes of economic diversification, boosting the contribution of non-oil sectors and activities with a target of an average 3.2 per cent annual contribution to GDP through focus on promising economic sectors such as technology-based manufacturing, agriculture and fisheries, food and agricultural industries, transportation, storage and logistics. The plan targets to boost the private sector's contribution to the economic sectors with high in-country value and complementing value-production and supply chains, boosting the contribution of small and medium enterprises.

With the aim of reinforcing the Oman Vision 2040, the measures initiated by His Majesty the Sultan included upgrading the state administrative apparatus, reformulating the Council of Ministers for the implementation of the development plans that would enhance government performance and boost its efficiency as well as modernising laws and legislation.

FISCAL BALANCE
In October, 2020, His Majesty the Sultan, within the framework of his keenness to redirect the Sultanate's financial resources and prioritising fiscal balance, approved the Medium-Term Fiscal Balance Plan (2020-2024) laid down by the government. The plan is aimed at achieving a fiscal balance between the state's revenues and public spending by the end of 2024, and preparing the financial conditions that support the launch of Oman Vision 2040.

His Majesty gave his Royal directives to speed up the construction of an integrated social security scheme with the aim of protecting low-income and social security families from the impact of the economic measures. The Royal orders also included the execution of several development projects in different governorates to the tune of RO 371 million.

STATE BUDGET
The State General Budget for fiscal year 2021 focused on guaranteeing the sustainability of the basic social services and maintaining a spending level no lower than 40 per cent on social services. His Majesty, upon presiding over the Council of Ministers' meeting in December, affirmed that he had followed up the preparation stages of the Tenth Five-Year Development Plan (2021-2025), the State General Budget for fiscal 2021, the initial executive plan of the Oman Vision 2040.

His Majesty also approved recommendations to set up two pension funds, one for the civil and private sectors and the other for the affiliates of the military and security bodies, and the amending of the minimum years of service required for early retirement to 30 years, and laying down a unified retirement system for newly-appointed employees in the government units and the private sector

with retrospective effect for employees who have not completed 10 years of service.

As part of the continued Royal attention to boosting digital competence and accelerating transformation to e-government, His Majesty affirmed his follow-up on the government's efforts in this regard with the aim of expediting procedures to achieve the aspirations of citizens, residents, investors and businessmen and empowering the strategic, economic and developmental sectors in the Sultanate. His Majesty gave his Royal directives to speed up the implementation of the national unified electronic portal for e-government services.

At the beginning of 2021, the Ministry of Finance, in response to the Royal directives, announced a package of incentives to citizens and the private sector during 2021.

Housing sops

The incentives include loans from Oman Housing Bank, with the annual sum designated for annual borrowing during 2021 to be increased to RO 100 million, from RO 60 million in the bank's budget in the same year. This will take the number of approvals for citizens' loans to 2,250 from 1,350. The step will shorten citizens' wait for their turn in obtaining housing loans.

Also, as part of the incentives,

the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning will help prepare for the distribution of 23,000 plots in different governorates and wilayats of the Sultanate.

Other incentives will exempt borrowers from Oman Development Bank and the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises from loan interests for one year (2021).

In his Royal address delivered to the nation in February last year, His Majesty laid down the most important principles and basics for the upcoming period of the development march. His Majesty focused on several issues that included the importance of youth in the nation-building process voicing his attention to listen to the youths and identifying their needs and aspirations which, His Majesty, affirmed will be given due attention.

His Majesty also stressed the importance of the small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurship sector especially the projects based on innovation, artificial intelligence and advanced technologies

In his Royal address delivered by His Majesty on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the blessed National Day, His Majesty affirmed his continued support to the health, social and economic sectors so that they can provide



MORE ATTENTION
TO THE
GOVERNORATES
AND MORE
POWERS TO THE
GOVERNORS

SULTANATE
WILL WORK WITH
UN MEMBER
STATES FOR
PEACE, STABILITY
AND PROSPERITY
ACROSS THE
WORLD

healthcare and educational services with high efficiency and competence being one of the priorities of the upcoming period.

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION
Stemming from His Majesty's keenness to identify the requirements of the educational sector across the Sultanate and providing a supportive climate for education, His Majesty gave his Royal directives to the Diwan of Royal

Court to finance the construction of 6 schools during the upcoming period at an amount of RO 8.85 million.

Testimony to His Majesty's attention to the national manpower, he issued Royal orders for taking necessary steps to establish the Job Security Fund (JSF), to which His Majesty granted RO 10 million as a foundation bid to set up the fund's system and encourage society to participate at a later stage. The initial phase of JSF officially began in November, 2020.

Within the framework of reviewing the state-owned companies and improving their performance, His Majesty issued Royal Decree No 61/2020, on the establishment of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), as a unified investment body comprising investment, monitoring and executive entities. The establishment of OIA marks a significant step that will certainly contribute to augmenting investment revenues and improving the Sultanate's international credit status.

DABA HARBOUR
Stemming from His Majesty's attention to continue with boosting economic growth and development, His Majesty gave his Royal directives in June for the implementation of developmental projects worth RO 300 mil-

lion including the development of a multi-purpose fishing harbour in the Wilayat of Daba in Musandam Governorate.

The governorates and municipal affairs system promulgated by Royal Decree No 101/2020, embodies the Royal attention accorded by His Majesty to boosting development in the governorates and reinforcing the role of the governors.

His Majesty affirmed that the government will continue to accord more attention to the governorates and grant more powers to the governors to enable them undertake their responsibilities in stimulating the economy, trade and investment away from centralisation.

Dialogue with masses

In order to deepen communication with the people across the Sultanate, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik in September last year met with a number of shaikhs and dignitaries of Dhofar Governorate in Salalah. The meeting stemmed from His Majesty's keenness to meet citizens in order to identify their needs and listen to their observations and proposals regarding development services.

LEASH ON COVID-19
With the aim of containing the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, His Majesty issued a Royal order to form the Supreme Committee under the chairmanship of the minister of interior for tackling the developments resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

His Majesty commended the Supreme Committee and the government authorities whose efforts resulted in alleviating the impact of the pandemic. His Majesty hailed the efforts of health workers and the people's commitment to the precautionary measures set by the authorities.

Peaceful resolution

On the front of foreign policy, His Majesty confirmed that the Sultanate will remain as it was during the reign of late Sultan Qaboos, affirming that the Sultanate will contribute to solving disputes by peaceful means, and will continue its role as an active member in the United Nations respecting its charter and working side by side with the member states to achieve international peace and stability and spreading economic prosperity across the world.

His Majesty confirmed that the Sultanate supports the principles of tolerance, collective work and peaceful coexistence. His Majesty affirmed that the Sultanate underscores the peaceful settlement of conflicts on the basis of the UN principles and charter and the international laws.

The Sultanate of Oman under the leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will confidently and competently continue its renewed Renaissance march and will work hard to boost development and achieve the wise visions laid down by His Majesty the Sultan for the interest of Oman and its people and for a more prosperous future. — ONA

tribute

to Sultan Qaboos

November 18
1940

born in Salalah, Dhofar



1958



IN 1958, HE GOES TO ENGLAND FOR
SCHOOLING

1960



HE JOINED THE ROYAL
MILITARY ACADEMY
AT SANDHURST



FOUNDER OF MODERN OMAN

Any history of modern Oman will be written in two segments — “Before Sultan Qaboos” and “After Sultan Qaboos.” For, in our times, no leader has so quickly transformed a society from near-medievalism to modernity, and a country from being insignificant within its region to becoming a globally-recognised force for good. Of no other country, has the name been so synonymous with that of its leader. Internationally, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos was admired and envied, by other leaders, as a relentless force for global peace, reconciliation and mediation. His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, upon ascension to the throne, put it succinctly, “He set up a modern state from scratch, a country that is now recognised by all, far and near.”

HM Sultan Qaboos achieved this for his people and his country by the sheer vigour of his personality, but gradually, his deeds matching his words. In an interview with *Foreign Affairs Journal* in 1997, he said, “I believe in evolution, and not a sudden evolution.” He spectacularly unified a nation riven with discontent, poverty, divided tribal allegiances and remoulded it according to his vision — of unity, respect, compassion and strength. He was passionately loved by the people of Oman, and it became almost offensive to contemplate a life without their Sultan Qaboos, who had ridden many a political and natural storm. So much so that when he left us for his heavenly abode, we lost much of our light.



UPON MILITARY EDUCATION, SULTAN QABOOS RETURNED TO BRITAIN
TO STUDY LOCAL GOVERNMENT. AFTER THAT HE UNDERTOOK
WORLD TOUR FOR 3 MONTHS



January 10
2020

FATHER OF RENAISSANCE
LEAVES FOR HEAVENLY ABODE



With tears in their eyes and prayers
in their hearts, the people of Oman
bid adieu to His Majesty Sultan
Qaboos, father of modern Oman.

1970



JULY 23, 1970, SULTAN QABOOS
DECLARED THAT THE COUNTRY WOULD
BE UNIFIED AS THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

1964



Sultan Qaboos returned home
to study Sharia law, civilisation
and history of Oman

A COMPASSIONATE FATHER OF THE NATION

ABDULAZIZ AL
JAHDHAMI
aljahdhami22@gmail.com

One year has already passed since the passing of our beloved leader Sultan Qaboos, may the Almighty Allah rest his soul in peace. It was an abnormal year indeed, as all Omanis had tough times and sad moments of grief for the great loss of His Majesty. They are still in mourning, missing the compassionate father of the nation and praying for him day and night. It has never been easy to forget a man who spent all the past 50 years building the country and people alike.

His loss is extremely hard on hearts as we, Omanis, are still in grief and pain. People have gone mad when they came to know about his passing and he will not be among us anymore! Elderly people have cried painfully for they had observed how Oman had witnessed the facelift in all spheres of life. Sultan Qaboos lifted Oman from darkness to brightness and glory in a record time.



If truth to be told, the whole world is missing him today; his wisdom, vision, strength, and firmness are being hardly missed too.

As the new year, 2021, has just kicked off and the first thing we recall as we welcomed January is the passing of Sultan Qaboos, the architect of Oman's blessed Renaissance. The day, January 10 will be remembered as a day of sorrow, grief and disappointment not only to Omanis but to the world

as well. Announcing his passing was unbelievable as an April fool; it was a disastrous shock to all. Could you imagine waking up in the morning with such heartbreaking news?! Everyone broke down and was painfully in tears.

Today, we are commemorating that day, marking the first anniversary of mourning the loss of Sultan Qaboos. On this day, we all, men and women, young and old, are paying tribute

to our benevolent father, visionary leader, and honest friend to people of other nations around the world. Undoubtedly, humanity is very grateful to him, one of a kind leader. He is badly missed; not only by Omanis but his friends and admirers worldwide too.

As we pray tribute to the memory of our beloved leader, it is worth shedding light on his key merits and commended deeds that are highly praised by the international community.

With wise and visionary leadership and commitment, late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos worked to shape Oman as an active and responsible member of the international family

his country and promised fellow citizens of a bright future, which he delivered in a record time. Besides, he spared no effort to promote Oman and position its status globally high. In that regard, Sultan Qaboos gained the respect and appreciation of his people and the world overall for all the great accomplishments made. Throughout the past five decades, he sacrificed his life, time and effort, leaving no stone unturned towards achieving his vision, fulfilling his promises, and making the dreams of Omanis come true.

Owing to his far-reaching international accomplishments as well as his wise and visionary leadership, Oman has been able to gain credibility

and trust at the regional and international levels. The country has become the epicentre of peace where conflicts and misunderstandings between nations can be resolved. Thanks to the foreign policy of Oman, which is undoubtedly distinct from others in the region. With wise and visionary leadership and commitment, Sultan Qaboos worked to shape Oman as an active and responsible member of the international family.

As the Sultanate is commemorating the passing of the great leader, we pray to the almighty Allah to rest his soul in peace and grant him paradise.

A ruler who put his country first

OMANI CITIZENS AND EXPATRIATES SHARE THEIR CHERISHED MEMORIES OF LATE HIS MAJESTY SULTAN QABOOS



I cried my heart out when I learnt that His Majesty had returned home after treatment abroad. Here is a person who had sacrificed so much for his country, and at the point of being very sick, he put his country first and not himself! When it was announced that he had passed away, a part of me too died and for a long time my tears flowed unstoppable!

Majid al Suleimany
Omani author, writer and columnist



REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENTS IN ALL FIELDS

"The divine wanted us to lose the father, the leader, the dearest of men, Sultan Qaboos. The late Sultan made numerous achievements witnessed by the far and near where Oman ranks top among the countries of the world. Oman has become a school approach in many political and social matters, external and internal." Environment, its system and its natural resources were strongly present in the thought

the late Sultan, since he assumed power and the beginning of the establishment of the modern state. Environment has been of great concern to him, as he traversed Oman from the northernmost part of Musandam Governorate to the far south of the Governorate of Dhofar.

Dr Dawood bin Sulaiman al Balushi
Director of Media in Environment Conservation Office at Diwan of Royal Court



INSPIRING SOCIAL CHARISMA

"One of the virtues that the late Sultan left and remains as the eternal influence of humanity, especially in Omani society is inspiring social charisma which was inspired by every individual in every family in the Omani society. The personal behaviour of the late Sultan was distinguished by many personal and official protocols from the beginning of his rule until his death, which resulted in the modeling of his thought and behaviours at the social level."

"Most of the protocols, personal elegance, eye-view gestures, silence and calmness that depicted the personality of Sultan Qaboos, made most people to imitate and model him to become an integral part of our daily behaviours in our ideology

and daily behaviour. His voice and tone when delivering speeches, his calmness and balance when moving, walking and sitting are all memorised by all Omanis."

Mohammed bin Saif al Mamari
Head of Social Development Department in Muscat



MAKER OF AN ECONOMIC RENAISSANCE

"The blessed Renaissance led by Sultan Qaboos was characterised by balance and flexibility. A comprehensive renaissance took place in various aspects of economic, political, development and social life."

"One of the most prominent features of the late Sultan's time is his interest in economic diversification in all fields, taking into account the social, value and heritage aspect of the Omani society. It has been an economic renaissance that preserved the community. The late Sultan focused in all his speeches on economic diversification, especially in light of economic conditions. The world was going through crises, including the decline in oil prices. The idea then came to establish a national programme to promote economic diversification, in order to achieve the economic vision."

Saud al Mawali
A media man

(Inputs from Zainab al Nassri, Kabeer Yousuf and Liju Cherian)

Electronic Tender (s)



Majan Electricity Co. (SAOC) Announces the Following E-Tenders

Tender NO	Description	Grade	Last date for buying	Submission date	Tender price R.O.
1/2021	NETWORK REINFORCEMENTS (415 V & 11 KV) FOR YEAR 2021 LIWA AREA IN VARIES LOCATION -NORTH BATINAH GOVERNORATE	C	18/1/2021	26/1/2021	49 /=
2/2021	RE-INFORCEMENT WORK ON VARIOUS LOACATIONS IN YANQUL AREA AT AL DHAHIRA GOVERNORATE	C	19/1/2021	26/1/2021	25 /=
3/2021	RE-INFORCEMENT WORK ON VARIOUS LOACATIONS IN DHANK AREA AT AL DHAHIRA GOVERNORATE	C	19/1/2021	26/1/2021	54 /=
4/2021	CONSTRUCTION OF NEW 11KV OG FEEDERS & INTERLINK IN SAHAM & KHAPOURAH NORTH AL BATINAH GOVERNORATE	C	20/1/2021	26/1/2021	38 /=
5/2021	CONSTRUCTION OF NEW 11KV OG FEEDERS & INTERLINK IN SOHAR NORTH AL BATINAH GOVERNORATE	C	20/1/2021	26/1/2021	116 /=
6/2021	REINFORCEMENT WORK 2021 IN VARIOUS LOACATIONS IN SOHAR AREA PHASE 1 AL NB GOVERNORATE	C	20/1/2021	26/1/2021	85 /=

Interested Firm having relevant experience in the similar nature of services and registered with Tender Board and Distribution Code Review Panel (DCRP) for electrical work, may register and obtain the tender documents from E-Tendering Site <https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om> against online payment of non-refundable fees mentioned above for each tender.

The Tenderers should enclose a copy of Bank Guarantee issued by any registered bank in the Sultanate of Oman for a value of (1%) of the submitted bid value valid for a period of (90) days from the date of Submission, and addressed to The Chairman of the Tender Committee .The original Bid Bond to be delivered in sealed envelope, and the tender number and title of project only are to be mentioned on the envelopes. The place of submission the original bond would be at MJEC Contracts & tenders office at MJEC building in AL Sawari Center in Sohar or at MJEC Contracts & tenders office at Muscat in Al Mubailah- opposite to the industrial Area beside to Bank Suhar ,before 10 A.M. according to the assigned date of submission of the tender. Any Submission of original tender bond after the time and date mentioned in the advertisement will not be accepted and tenderer offer will be rejected.

The Completed signed and sealed commercial and technical offer with all tender documents should be submitted and uploaded online into the above mentioned E-Tendering website .The Hard copies of the tender document are not accepted.

For more information please contact Tel no.:24051501- 26944266

For any technical assistance please contact

Helpdesk: +968-24166670

E-mail: etenderhd@ita.gov.om

Preference of awarding the tender will be given to those bidders who achieved a high percentage of purchasing from Local Products & and have a High level percentage of Omanization.

The Company is not bound to consent the lowest Bid or any other Tenders.

"WITH ELECTRICITY WE PROGRESS PLEASE AVOID EXTRAVAGANCE IN CONSUMPTION"



Majan Electricity Company S.A.O.C
P.O Box 286, Sohar
PC 311, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: +968 2694 4444 | Fax: +968 2694 4222
Information@majanco.nama.om | www.majanco.co.om

A LEADER REVERED BY EVERYONE



As we pay homage to our beloved Sultan Qaboos on his first death anniversary, we recall with profoundly grateful hearts his tremendous and longstanding leadership as the Architect of Oman's blessed Renaissance. During his five-decade-long reign, the late Sultan laid the foundations for the growth of a strong and prosperous country that today stands justifiably proud among the GCC and other developed countries.

**Mohamed Abdullah
Mohamed al Khonji**
Chairman,
United Finance Company

Paying tribute to late HM Sultan Qaboos on his first death anniversary is akin to lighting a lamp in the glaring sun. Very few countries are blessed with leaders who are visionary, dedicated, and compassionate towards the nation and its citizens. Blessed are people who are led by compassionate and visionary leadership.

Dr Syed Ahsan Jamil
Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Dhofar
University, Salalah

A leader is revered by the legacy he leaves behind him. For a ruler, the legacy is the development of the nation and its people. No leader in recent times has done so much for his country as late Sultan Qaboos (may Allah be pleased with him) has done for Oman and its people.

Yusuf Nalwala
Managing Director of Al Ansari
Group of Companies and
Partner

His vision on Education and health ensured a generation of healthy, educated people who contributed to their family and the nation. His learned foreign policies ensured that Oman was respected by all nations. The continuity of pragmatic leadership of this beautiful Sultanate of Oman by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik will surely ensure this country and its people will prosper.

Rayees Ahmed
Educationist and Chairman of
School Management Committee
of Indian School Ghubra



The Sultan who returned Oman to its glory

SULIEMAN AL HAJRI

To understand a profound leader and his legacy one must look back into his background. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos was born on November 18, 1940 in Salalah. His mother, Sultana Mazayoun was the daughter of Shaikh Ahmad bin Ali al Mashani, a leader of the prominent Al Mashani tribe. HM Sultan Qaboos was the fourteenth-generation descendant of the Al Said ruling family and the longest-serving leader in the Middle East and the Arab world.

HM Sultan Qaboos was educated in Britain's Royal Military College in Sandhurst and returned to Salalah in 1964 after his graduation where he was put under virtual house arrest. He worked hard to convince his father to change the inclusiveness policy and adapt Oman's transformation into development to no avail. In 1970, he acted swiftly to become the Sultan of Oman. His vision from the outset was to develop the country to stand amongst the developed nations politically, economically and to lay the necessary foundations for his people's development and related infrastructure.

In 1970, Oman was in desperate need of a stern leader. A visionary, a commander in chief, who would, lead his people to victory. A leader who would understand how to effectively turn the misfortunes of the modest state budget to grow immensely within a very short period.

LEAD HIS PEOPLE PEACEFULLY

A leader who would be accountable to lead his people peacefully towards the shore of the modern world. HM Sultan Qaboos laid a task before him to put Oman back onto the rails. During his tenure as the Sultan, his vision would be challenged to its limits given Oman at

HM Sultan Qaboos laid a task before him to put Oman back onto the rails. His vision would be challenged to its limits given Oman at the time was amongst the poorest nations with almost non-existent developmental programmes and infrastructure

the time was amongst the poorest nations with almost non-existent developmental programmes and infrastructure. To add to his challenges, Oman was facing serious internal and external immense security challenges. Oman was internally divided, and its borders were externally threatened. He had communists on the doorstep! Reflecting his leadership achievements, it is absolutely clear that his most important strategy was to establish Oman security. In doing so, as a commander-in-chief, he created a strong coherent security force. His main aim was to protect Omani borders, which would eventually facilitate the necessary building blocks for internal security, and the country's economic growth whilst maintaining Oman past heritage and achievements. This later reflected the integrated bonds between security and development programmes. The mechanisms of the security forces were integrated and strengthened and during the time of need, they would perform to the utmost professionalism.

Humble and simple was your way

DR KHALFAN AL HARRASSI

After 49 years of building Oman, the longest-serving and best seasoned leader in the Middle-East and Arab world, the beloved father of Omani people, HM Sultan Qaboos left for the heavenly abode, and before leaving he ensured the reins of the country was smoothly handed over to the most qualified and wise leader HM Sultan Haitham bin Tarik.

For the Omani people, Sultan Qaboos was not merely a ruler, a king or a sultan! He was a visionary leader, an exemplary teacher, a sincere counsellor and a loving father, with whom more than 70 per cent of Omanis were born and raised during his steadfast half-century of leadership. The love and great affection the Omanis have for the deceased Sultan Qaboos is indelible and imprinted in the mind, soul and heart of every Omani citizen.

Without going into details that no amount of volumes can hold, HM Sultan Qaboos, with his unwavering commitment, revolutionized pre-1970 Oman and transformed it into a developed nation, while preserving its unique identity, heritage, customs, traditions, culture and safety, all of which differentiate Oman from the rest of the world!

From a poor country, dependent mainly on fishing and farming, HM Sultan Qaboos laid down, with well-studied phases and steps, strong and vibrant developmental infrastructure foundations through which massive modernization programmes and developments were achieved that enriched Oman with significantly high standards of living, to list a few, in schools, higher education, healthcare, social services, hospitals, roads, telecommunication, technology, sea ports, airports,

We shall translate our love to our HM Sultan Qaboos into stronger love and loyalty to HM Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and to Oman. Thank you HM Sultan Qaboos not only for all you have done, but by the remarkable dignity you displayed in anointing your successor with such gravitas and dignity

hotels, army, police, ministries, banks, post offices, jobs, public and private civil service institutions.

Sultan Qaboos never compromised the comfort, life, security and peace of his country; his utmost objective was improving the life of the Omani people, while at the same time, with his external leadership wisdom, in which he committedly sought to solidify ties, bring peace and develop mutual global understanding, by assisting others to solve their political tensions and gain regional stability. He became a man I would like to call a worldwide peace consultant and peacemaker!

We shall all remember the continuous wisdom of the speeches through which Sultan Qaboos encouraged Omanis to believe in their own abilities, and he encouraged us to work hard to maximize and achieve the huge potential that each of us possess, in order to serve Oman in its quest for a dignified, decent, promising and prosperous future.



This is an opportunity to pay tribute to the great leader who shaped the country in a big way and for business operators like us it was always smooth sailing. Sultan Qaboos' rich legacy will continue to bestow rich dividends on the citizens of Oman and the grateful expatriate residents of this blessed homeland for decades to come.

Bipin Kapur
BDO Managing Partner

The strides that the country made under the late Sultan Qaboos have been transformative. The business community in Oman is grateful to Sultan Qaboos for his business-friendly policies and regulations which created not only multiple opportunities but also provided ease of working in the Sultanate. Oman has been, and remains, one of the best places to do business and is a home away from home for most of our employees.

Shapoor Mistry
Chairman, Shapoorji Pallonji
Group

The late Sultan was the founder of new Oman that has raised the country to the heights of glory and the zenith of progress among the various nations of the world.

Maryam Suleiman al Hinai
Marketing Specialist, Ministry
of Higher Education, Scientific
Research and Innovation

He was a leader with superb vision who kept the interest of the nation and the people living in Oman as his top priority. Such leaders are born very seldom. Though Baba Qaboos has gone back to the eternal world, he remains alive in our hearts and minds. Every civic amenity and comfort of life we have in Oman today will keep reminding of his presence around us. May Allah bless him a well-deserved place in Jannat.

Mohammad Osama Rawat
General Manager of the
Oriental Pharmacy

In brief

NEW DELHI



TEN NEWBORNS DIE IN INDIAN HOSPITAL FIRE

Ten newborn infants died on Saturday in a fire at a state-run hospital in western India, officials said. There were 17 infants in the unit for sick newborn babies when the fire broke out in the early hours of Saturday at the Bhandara District General Hospital in Maharashtra.

Seven infants died due to smoke suffocation, and three from burn injuries, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope told reporters. Seven babies were rescued by the nurses and ward staff. All the infants were aged between a few days and three months, Bhandara district health official Prashant Uike said. — dpa

TEHRAN



UN INSPECTORS TO BE EXPELLED 'UNLESS CURBS ARE LIFTED'

Iran will expel United Nations nuclear watchdog inspectors unless sanctions are lifted by a February 21 deadline set by the parliament, a lawmaker said on Saturday. Parliament passed a law in November that obliges the government to halt inspections of its nuclear sites by the International Atomic Energy Agency and to step up uranium enrichment beyond the limit set under Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal if sanctions are not eased.

Iran's Guardian Council watchdog body approved the law on December 2 and the government has said it will implement it. — Reuters

KABUL



GHANI WANTS TO HAND OVER POWER TO 'ELECTED SUCCESSOR'

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said on Saturday that his goal was to hand over power to an "elected successor," amid calls for an interim government as a path to peace with the Taliban. "My basic goal is to be able to hand power, through the will of the people, to my elected successor," Ghani told Christiane Amanpour in an interview with CNN. "We're not a type of society that the Taliban-type approach of the past can be imposed on us. That was the peace of the graveyard," he said.

Last week, a member of the Afghan negotiating team Hafiz Mansour said that certain countries were willing to help Afghanistan establish an interim government. — dpa

Qatar-Saudi border reopens after thaw

ABU SAMRAH, Qatar: Qatar and Saudi Arabia reopened their land border on Saturday, AFP correspondents saw, as they restore ties following a landmark deal to end a three and a half year rift.

Saudi shut its side of Qatar's only land border in June 2017 as part of a package of sanctions.

A Qatari source said that traffic at the Abu Samrah crossing, 120 kilometres south of Doha, resumed around 0700 GMT.

Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, all of which also imposed an embargo on travel and trade, agreed to lift the restrictions at a Gulf Cooperation



A car crossing the Qatari side of the Abu Samrah border into Saudi Arabia following the opening of crossings between the two countries. — AFP

Council summit in the kingdom on Tuesday.

The day before the summit,

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser al Sabah had announced on state television that a deal had

been agreed to "open the airspace and land and sea borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the State of Qatar".

Only a trickle of cars arrived at the palm tree-lined, whitewashed border post to make the short crossing to the Saudi side after news broke that the frontier had reopened.

A smaller number made the journey from Saudi Arabia to Qatar, where strict measures to fight the spread of the novel coronavirus have been imposed.

"I'm very happy the border is open again," said Qatari Jaber al Marri, as he approached a checkpoint in his Land Cruiser SUV, adding that he had relatives

in the neighbouring kingdom.

"A lot of Qataris have relatives in Saudi Arabia," he said.

"The coming days will be better," added the man, holding a negative coronavirus test result in his hand.

Qatar has announced strict coronavirus control measures for those arriving from the Saudi side. Doha will require travellers to present a negative test result, undergo a fresh test at the frontier and quarantine in a government-approved hotel for one week.

A helicopter belonging to the Qatari health service shuttled supplies between Doha and the border, an AFP correspondent reported. — AFP

BIRD FLU IN 6 STATES



Commuters drive past a flock of pigeons on a bridge in New Delhi on Saturday. At least six Indian states have stepped up efforts to contain two strains of bird flu — H5N1 and H5N8 — in recent days after the deaths of thousands of migratory birds, ducks, crows and chickens. — AFP

India to start mammoth vaccination drive on Jan 16

NEW DELHI: India will launch one of the world's most ambitious coronavirus vaccination drives next Saturday, aiming to reach 300 million people by July, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced. The vaccine is to be free for the country's population of 1.3 billion, and Modi said the January 16 start would be "a landmark step" in fighting the pandemic.

India is the world's second worst-hit country — behind the

United States — with more than 10 million cases, though the death rate is one of the world's lowest.

The first phase will target about 30 million health and other frontline workers including security forces and 270 million people over 50 or at highest risk from COVID-19.

The government has said it wants to have the first 300 million people inoculated by the end of July and has already staged mass trials of vaccination centres

across the country.

About 150,000 staff in 700 districts have been trained and roughly 290,000 temperature-controlled supply points, 240 walk-in coolers, 70 walk-in freezers, 45,000 ice-line refrigerators are ready for use.

The government has approved two vaccines — AstraZeneca/Oxford University's Covishield and one produced by Indian pharmaceutical firm Bharat Biotech. — AFP

North Korea's Kim calls US 'principal enemy'

SEOUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said the United States is his nuclear-armed nation's "principal enemy", state media reported on Saturday, as he threw down the diplomatic gauntlet to the incoming administration of Joe Biden.

The declaration comes less than two weeks ahead of the new US president's inauguration and after a tumultuous relationship between Kim and the outgoing leader Donald Trump.

Kim and Trump first engaged in a war of words and mutual threats, before an extraordinary diplomatic bromance that featured headline-grabbing summits and declarations of love by the US president.

But little substantive progress was made, with the process deadlocked after their February 2019 meeting in Hanoi broke down over sanctions relief and



North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attends the first day of the 8th Congress of the Workers' Party in Pyongyang, on January 6. — Reuters file photo

what Pyongyang would be willing to give up in return.

The North should focus on "containing and subduing the US, the fundamental obstacle to the

development of our revolution and our foremost principal enemy", Kim told the five-yearly congress of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea, the official KCNA

news agency reported.

"The real intention of its policy toward the DPRK will never change, whoever comes into power in the US," it quoted him

as saying, using the initials of the North's official name but without specifically mentioning Biden.

"The check has come due on the Singapore and Hanoi Summits," tweeted Ankit Panda of the Carnegie Endowment. "And the Biden administration gets to pick up the tab."

The change of leadership in Washington presents a challenge for Pyongyang, which has previously called Biden a "rabid dog", while he characterised Kim as a "thug" during the presidential debates. The US is expected to return to more orthodox diplomatic approaches under Biden, such as insisting on extensive progress at working-level talks before any leaders' summit can be considered.

Kim "sees a stalemate that won't change anytime soon," said Harry Kazianis of the Center for the National Interest. — AFP



A healthcare worker receives a dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at a vaccination centre near Paris on Saturday. — Reuters

New COVID-19 variant found in 8 US states

WASHINGTON/PARIS: A new, more infectious strain of the coronavirus has now spread to at least eight US states, official data showed on Friday, as the country logged a record new daily virus caseload.

The B117 coronavirus strain, which emerged in Britain late last year, has been shown to be between 40 and 70 per cent more contagious than variants which have spread previously.

Data from the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) showed on Friday that the strain — first reported in the US last week — has been detected in eight states, with California and Florida the worst affected.

The strain has also been found in Colorado, Texas, New York, Georgia, Connecticut and Pennsylvania, in a total of 63 cases.

RECURRING SYMPTOMS

More than three quarters of people hospitalised with COVID-19 still suffered from at least one symptom after six months, according to a study published on Saturday that scientists said shows the need for further investigation into lingering coronavirus effects.

The research, which was published

in the *Lancet* medical journal and involved hundreds of patients in the Chinese city of Wuhan, is among the few to trace the long-term symptoms of COVID-19 infection.

It found that fatigue or muscle weakness were the most common symptoms, while people also reported sleeping difficulties.

“Because COVID-19 is such a new disease, we are only beginning to understand some of its long-term effects on patients’ health,” said lead author Bin Cao, of the National Center for Respiratory Medicine.

The professor said the research highlighted the need for ongoing care for patients after they have been discharged from hospital, particularly those who have had severe infections.

“Our work also underscores the importance of conducting longer follow-up studies in larger populations in order to understand the full spectrum of effects that COVID-19 can have on people,” he added.

The World Health Organization has said the virus poses a risk for some people of serious ongoing effects — even among young, otherwise healthy people who were not hospitalised. — AFP

Indonesian plane feared crashed after losing contact

JAKARTA: An Indonesian budget airline plane with 62 people on board is suspected to have crashed into the sea shortly after the Boeing 737 took off from Jakarta airport on Saturday, authorities said.

Flight tracking data showed the Sriwijaya Air Boeing 737-500 plunged into a steep dive about four minutes after it left Soekarno-Hatta international airport.

Sixty-two passengers and crew were on board, including 10 children, the nation’s Transport Minister, Budi Karya Sumadi, told reporters.

The suspected crash site is near tourist islands just off the coast of Indonesia’s sprawling capital.

Sriwijaya Air flight SJ182 was bound for Pontianak on Indonesia’s section of Borneo island, about 90 minutes flying time over the Java Sea.

Distraught relatives waited nervously for news at the city’s airport.

“I have four family members on the flight — my wife and my three children,” Yaman Zai said as he sobbed.

“(My wife) sent me a picture of the baby today... How could my heart not be torn into pieces?”

The plane took off on Saturday afternoon and a search and rescue operation began with no official results available on Saturday night.

“We deployed our team, boats and sea riders to the location suspected to be where it went down after losing contact,” Bambang Suryo Aji, a senior official at the search-and-rescue agency, told reporters after nightfall.

SUDDEN PLUNGE

Data from FlightRadar24 said the plane reached an altitude of nearly 11,000 feet before dropping



Relatives of passengers on board missing Sriwijaya Air flight SJY182 wait for news at the Supadio airport in Pontianak on Indonesia’s Borneo island on Saturday. — AFP



suddenly to 250 feet. It then lost contact with air traffic control.

“Sriwijaya Air flight #SJ182 lost more than 10,000 feet of altitude in less than one minute, about 4 minutes after departure from

Jakarta,” the tracking agency said on its official Twitter account.

Broadcaster Kompas TV quoted local fishermen as saying they had found debris near islands just off the coast of the capital Jakarta,

but it could not be immediately confirmed as having belonged to the missing jet.

Authorities and the airline gave no immediate indication as to why the plane suddenly went down.

The budget airline, which has about 19 Boeing jets that fly to destinations in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, said only that it was investigating the loss of contact.

In October 2018, 189 people were killed when a Lion Air Boeing 737 MAX jet slammed into the Java Sea about 12 minutes after take-off from Jakarta on a routine one-hour flight.

That crash — and a subsequent fatal flight in Ethiopia — saw Boeing hit with \$2.5 billion in fines over claims it defrauded regulators overseeing the 737 MAX model, which was grounded worldwide following the two deadly crashes.

The Boeing jet thought to have crashed on Saturday is not a MAX model. — AFP

Democrats plan impeachment; Twitter deletes Trump account

WASHINGTON: An increasingly isolated President Donald Trump sought on Friday to stave off a new drive to impeach him and Twitter permanently suspended his account, two days after his supporters stormed the US Capitol in an assault on American democracy.

Twitter, long Trump’s favourite way to communicate with his supporters and a way to share his false claims of election fraud with his nearly 90 million followers, had been under increasing pressure to take action after Wednesday’s

mayhem in Washington.

Trump exhorted thousands of supporters to march on the Capitol as Congress met to certify his defeat to Democrat Joe Biden, prompting chaos in which crowds breached the building, forced the evacuation of both chambers and left a police officer and four others dead in their wake.

“After close review of recent Tweets from the @realDonaldTrump account and the context around them we have permanently suspended the account due to the risk of further



Members of the National Guard stand next to a fence and barricades set up around the US Capitol building in Washington, on Saturday. — Reuters

incitement of violence,” Twitter said. Plans for future armed protests were proliferating on and off Twitter, the company added, including a proposed secondary attack on the Capitol on January 17.

Trump used the official @POTUS government account later on Friday to tweet “We will not be SILENCED!” and “Twitter is not about FREE SPEECH.” Trump said he was considering building his own social media platform. Twitter quickly deleted those posts.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said on Friday that if Trump did not

resign, she had instructed the House Rules Committee to move ahead with a motion for impeachment and legislation on the US Constitution’s 25th Amendment, which provides for removal of a president who is unable to discharge his official duties.

Democrats, who said a House vote on impeachment could come next week, hope the impeachment threat will intensify pressure on Pence and the Cabinet to invoke the 25th Amendment before Trump’s term ends in less than two weeks. — Reuters

Queen Elizabeth, husband receive vaccines

Britain’s Queen Elizabeth and her husband Philip, both in their nineties, have received vaccinations against COVID-19, Buckingham Palace said on Saturday. “The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh have today received COVID-19 vaccinations,” the palace said in a statement. The Queen is 94 years old and Philip is 99, putting them in the priority category in Britain’s coronavirus vaccine rollout.

A royal source said the vaccines were administered by a



household doctor at the queen’s Windsor Castle residence, adding that she made the news public to counter any speculation. — Reuters

Child is run over twice by car and survives

A child in Switzerland survived after being driven over twice by a car, police reported on Saturday. A driver was moving his car to a different parking spot in the town of Oberentfelden on Friday evening when he ran over the 2-year-old boy on a small balance bike. When the boy’s mother shouted out at the 53-year-old man, he put the car in reverse and rolled over him a second time, police spokesperson Adrian Bieri said.

The boy sustained bone



fractures, but he remained conscious and responsive after the accident, according to the spokesperson. — dpa

Four die in Spanish storm, troops deployed

Four people died in Spain as Storm Filomena caused travel chaos across the country, blanketing Madrid in the heaviest snowfall in decades and forcing authorities to mobilise troops to rescue trapped motorists. Rescue services reached 1,500 people trapped in cars, while skiers glided down Gran Via, normally one of the busiest streets in the capital. Other Madrid residents used the freak blizzard to snowboard down the road or pelt each other with snowballs.



A man and woman who were travelling in a car drowned after a river burst its banks near Malaga, southern Spain, and two homeless people froze to death, one in Madrid and the other in the eastern city of Calatayud, authorities said. — Reuters

Keeping kids safe in the car is a job for mum and dad... ‘make it click!’

When I get affronted, aggravated, agitated, aggrieved, angered, annoyed, cross, disgruntled, displeased, exasperated, frustrated, galled, irked, irritated, miffed, peeked, peeved, rankled, riled, ruffled, ticked-off, upset, or vexed. When someone or something gets on my goat, gets on my nerves, gets on my wick, gets under my skin, gives me the hump, browns me off, brasses me off, ruffles my feathers, or leaves me not best pleased... my response tends to be sharp.

The weird thing is, that mostly I take offence not at what is happening or can happen to me, but the disastrous consequences I see emerging for others, and never are these scenarios more evident than on the road, and no, not speeders, tailgaters, loonies or hoons, but Mums and Dads.

In 2017 the Royal Oman Police implemented stringent traffic laws on seat belts and child safety seats to help reduce number of fatalities in road accidents. These measures were widely praised in a World Health Organization 2018 Report on Road Safety, which identified child restraints as being significantly effective in reducing the risk of injury and death to child occupants by a massive 60 per cent, with children under four years of age, the most vulnerable. The report commended that child seats were



Ray Petersen
r.j.petersen52@gmail.com

IN 2017 THE ROP IMPLEMENTED STRINGENT TRAFFIC LAWS ON SEAT BELTS AND CHILD SAFETY SEATS TO HELP REDUCE NUMBER OF FATALITIES IN ROAD ACCIDENTS

made compulsory for those under four, while children under ten years, must be in seat belts, in rear seats.

Today, so often, I cringe when I still see kiddies and children, clambering all over Mum and Dad as they are driving, standing, and playing on the front seats, playing on front and rear seats, hanging out of windows and sunroofs... I have cringed seeing little kiddies sitting on Dad’s lap while he is driving. Now the reality, and make no mistake, this is a reality... of this situation is that if an accident occurs in any of these scenarios, is that the child, or children, will be seriously maimed or die! Not taken from you, but because of your carelessness!

Now that may well sound harsh, and be hard to read or hear, but it is the truth, and do you really want to gamble with your kids’ lives? I do not come from any position of superiority in this, but a volatile position of concern. I have heard all the reasons why not, from “Our families are bigger,” to “they cry and get upset,” to “they will be okay Inshallah,” and these are all parenting failure excuses, not reasons, and I have been down that road myself, when they were made compulsory in my home country, where we had the same opposition, and the same excuses.

But parents, in this, no matter how

much you do not wish to antagonise your children, you must. You cannot defer this issue to their children, or make the children responsible for compliance... This, parents, is your call. Are you prepared to gamble with the lives and futures of your offspring? Do not gamble! Educate your children to “make it click.” Set a good example yourself... make your seat belt “click” and encourage them to do the same. Motivate them to do it right with praise and rewards but make it “click!”

The NTSA in America credits seatbelts and child restraints with saving an estimated 90,000 lives each year since legislation was passed in 1975, based on real, genuine, accident statistics. Can you really ignore such statistics and advice? Do you really, really, really believe that if another car hits yours without warning you can reach across, or back, and prevent your child or children from harm? No, you cannot! You are not that good! Nobody is!

As I said earlier, the law was implemented in 2017, and I expect an informal grace period was applied to allow car seats to be bought, and children to be educated in car safety. That time must surely be over, and the concerned authorities should now do the right thing... and save young lives. “Make it Click!”

COPING WITH BURDEN

Students earn their spurs in packed Czech hospitals

JAN FLEMR

Hundreds of medical students have volunteered to help out in Czech hospitals packed with COVID-19 patients where staff are struggling with one of the highest infection rates in the world.

Wrapped up in protective gear including a visor and two pairs of rubber gloves, student Tereza Zalesakova, 22, performs a blood sugar test on a woman with COVID who is on a breathing aid.

She then moves on to the next bay in the intensive care unit of Prague’s General University Hospital to help feed a coughing and wheezing elderly man.

“I started to work here at the beginning of November because they lacked auxiliary staff,” said Zalesakova, a medical student at Prague’s Charles University.

“If the nurses don’t need me, the doctors often let me perform different medical interventions which I wouldn’t do as a student,” she said.

“It’s a priceless experience,” said Zalesakova, who hopes to become a surgeon some day.

Hospitals across the Czech Republic have been on the verge of maximum capacity since the autumn, when the EU member of 10.7 million people saw a massive spike in COVID cases.

It had Europe’s highest per capita COVID-19 daily death rate for several weeks in October and November, and the contagion rate in recent days has been higher than in the United States.

The Czech health ministry has registered more than 800,000 confirmed cases since the March outbreak, including 12,800 deaths.

On two days this week, new cases topped a record 17,000. “The hospital capacity is close to its limit. The main reason is the absence of staff primarily due to COVID-19 infections,” Deputy Health Minister Vladimir Cerny told reporters on Friday.

‘AN AWFUL LOT OF WORK’

To cope with the burden, the government has called on students as well as soldiers to help in hospitals or retirement homes. The university medical students come forward on their own initiative and get paid as part-time staff.

“The students do an awful lot of work and we’re really grateful for that,” said Petra Havrlikova, a matron on the General University Hospital’s fourth internal medicine ward.

“They help us position the patients, they help with the morning hygiene, send samples to labs or disinfect the rooms,” she said.

“I think many of them saw a patient up close for the first time here,” Havrlikova said.

Resting after a three-hour stint at the intensive care unit, medical student Karolina Nekolova, 22, braces for another round there over a box of chocolates she shares with nurses.

“The toughest thing is to cope with a patient’s death, that’s sad and nobody has prepared us for that,” she said.

Nekolova and Zalesakova, who are in the third year of their six-year medical studies at Charles University, work up to ten 12-hour shifts a month, each comprising six hours in intensive care and six hours of other work. — AFP

CAPITOL SIEGE CONTENT

FB-Twitter crackdown too little, too late

KATIE PAUL, ELIZABETH CULLIFORD & JOSEPH MENN

By the time social media companies took action against users and groups spurring on the siege of Capitol Hill this week, culminating in the suspension of US President Donald Trump’s accounts, it was too little too late.

For weeks, content on big tech platforms Facebook Inc, Twitter Inc and Alphabet Inc’s YouTube as well as upstart fringe social networks foretold the storming of the US Capitol on Wednesday that led to five deaths.

In one Facebook post identified by online advocacy group Avaaz, an illustration of Trump holding a machine gun in front of the White House is accompanied by the words “Come and Take it.” Another depicted Trump as Uncle Sam with text paraphrasing the president: “I want you in Washington DC January 6. It’s going to be WILD.”

After the violence, right-wing social users on smaller platforms were retelling the story with videos from the siege to bigger, new audiences, while the major sites showed users sharing false claims about the unrest and groups dedicated to “Stop the Steal.” The slogan refers to pro-Trump followers belief, encouraged by him without providing evidence, that the November 3 election was fraudulent in favour of Democrat Joe Biden.

Facebook said it “removed content and accounts that violated our policies against inciting violence and dangerous organisations in the lead-up to January 6” and was continuing



A photo illustration shows the suspended Twitter account of US President Donald Trump on a smartphone at the White House briefing room in Washington on Friday. — Reuters

AFTER THE VIOLENCE, RIGHT-WING SOCIAL USERS ON SMALLER PLATFORMS WERE RETELLING THE STORY WITH VIDEOS FROM THE SIEGE TO BIGGER, NEW AUDIENCES

to monitor and remove dangerous content.

A Twitter spokeswoman said the company had “taken enforcement action on thousands of accounts that were attempting to undermine the public conversation and cause real-world harm.”

On Friday, Twitter permanently suspended Trump’s account and also suspended accounts belonging to vitriolic Trump fans including Ron Watkins, who helped run little-regulated image board 8kun, home of many recent posts calling for violence.

YouTube said it removes content

that violates its community guidelines.

Disinformation experts said that while big platforms allowed radical racists, violence enthusiasts and conspiracy theorists to amass large audience, leading influencers learned what they could get away with.

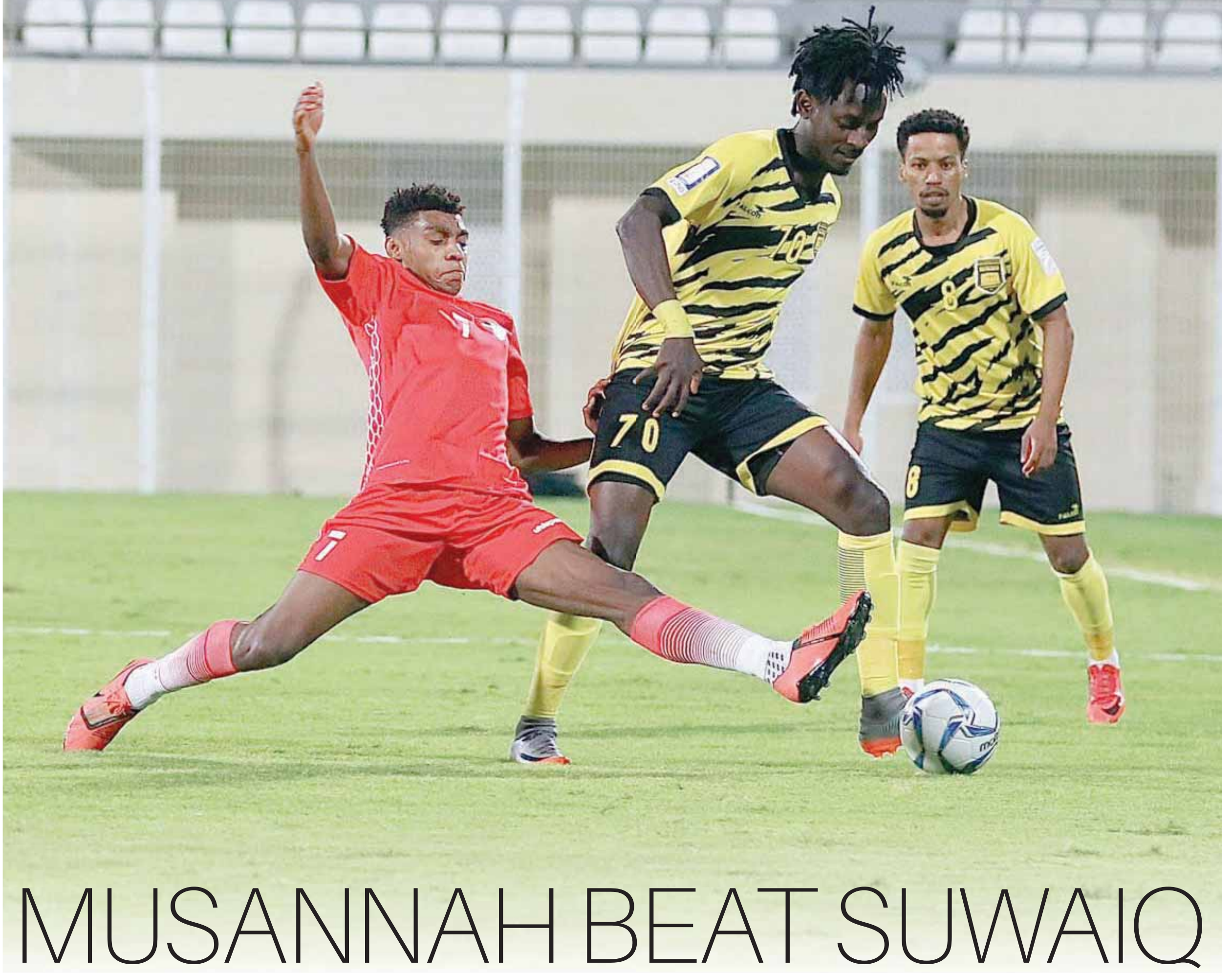
“You end up with a very diluted form of the content on the large platform, and the more radical stuff is elsewhere, like ISIS does it,” said Alex Stamos, the former Facebook chief security officer who runs a Stanford programme exposing disinformation. He was referring to Islamic state militants. — Reuters

sport

OMAN OBSERVER

www.omanobserver.om

follow us: @observersportz



MUSANNAH BEAT SUWAIQ TO REACH SECOND SPOT

ADIL AL BALUSHI

MUSCAT, JAN 9

The new arrival Musannah delivered an impressive show in the fourth week of Omantel League as they snatched a 1-0 win over Al Suwaiq on Friday at Al Rustaq Sports Complex.

The triumph pushed them to the second place with nine points behind the league leaders Seeb who are topping by ten points. It is the third consecutive victory for the South Batinah team under the supervision of the coach AbdulHaleem al Warimi.

Majid al Saadi scored the all-important goal in the dying minutes to take his team to the top position of the league order while Al Suwaiq dropped from second position to the fourth place with seven points.

The 2019/2020 season runner-up, Dhofar, climbed two positions as they beat Muscat 2-0 at Al Saada

The triumph pushed them to the second place with nine points behind the league leaders Seeb who are topping by ten points. It is the third consecutive victory for the South Batinah team under the supervision of the coach AbdulHaleem al Warimi

Sports Complex.

Ali al Najjar and Lawsin Bikai netted the hosts goal. The Salalah giant are the only team in the league who ended all the league matches on winning notes but the team impacted negatively with the OFA decision on deduction of six points due to obtaining the permits and licences.

The head coach of Dhofar



Rasheed Jaber, affirmed in his statement post the match that he will work hard to eliminate the missing scoring opportunities in front of the net.

“Continuity on delivering the top technical performance in the forthcoming weeks and clinching the winning points are the main objectives,” he added.

Ibrahim Sumar’s men are still struggling in the league as they have one point only from four games and the capital city team was positioned in the danger zone at 12th position.

Al Ittihad suffered another loss against Al Rustaq 2-1 at the former’s home in Al Saada Sports Complex. The victory for Al Rustaq meant that the South Batinah team returned to the victories after their loss against Oman in the previous round.

Al Rustaq now possess six points in the seventh place while the loss kept Salalah-based team in

the 11th position with two points only.

Al Nahdha were held to a 1-1 draw by Bahla at Al Buraimi Sports Complex. Bahla raised one spot above from tenth to ninth place with three points while Al Nahdha impacted with the points deduction as they were placed in the bottom with (-2) points. The hosts took the lead by Robert Jansa and Bahla’s Husni al Hinai found the net to score the equaliser.

The fifth week’s matches will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday. Muscat will host Al Ittihad at Seeb Stadium while Al Rustaq will take on Sohar.

The league leaders will meet Saham at the latter’s home. Al Nahdha will travel to Muscat to face off Oman club while Al Suwaiq will clash with Nizwa and Bahla will face off with Musannah. The derby between Dhofar and Al Nasr will be the top fixture of the week at Al Saada Sports Complex.



Ibrahimovic returns to AC Milan squad against Torino

Zlatan Ibrahimovic has been recalled to the AC Milan squad after seven weeks out injured for Saturday's Serie A match against Torino. The 39-year-old, who has missed the Serie A leaders' last eight league games, had not been expected to return until next weekend against Cagliari. — AFP



Duff steps down from Ireland coaching role

Former Chelsea winger Damien Duff has stepped down from his role as one of Ireland's assistant coaches, the country's football association (FAI) said. The 41-year-old, who was capped 100 times by Ireland, was appointed to manager Stephen Kenny's staff in August last year alongside Keith Andrews. — Reuters



Sandeep Goud and Aamir Kaleem of Muscat CT

Sandeep, Aamir bowl Muscat to big win

MUSCAT: Sandeep Goud and Aamir Kaleem ran through Arm Alpha to help Muscat CT to another victory in a Premier Division 50-over league game at OC Turf 1 in Al Amerat on Friday. Relying on its potent bowling attack, Muscat invited Alpha to bat first and performed a perfect encore, dismissing the whole side for 85. Goud was the pick of Muscat bowlers raking 5/27 while Kaleem claimed 4 for 13.

Brief Scores (Premier Division 50 overs): Arm Alpha 85 for all out in 26.5 overs (Mohammad Asgar 20 - 1x4, Sandeep Goud 5-27, Aamir Kaleem 4-13) lost to Muscat CT 86 for 2 in 14 overs (Shoaib Khan 36 - 5x4, Ayaan Khan 35 - 4x4) by 8 wickets.

Ilyas, Qasim star in ACT win
Ilyas Afreedi (91 off 67) and Qasim Ali (80 off 43) struck 14 sixes to set OC Turf 2 on fire as ACT thrashed OCT Muscat by 125 runs in a 50-over A Division match on Friday.

Brief Scores (A Division 50 overs): ACT 330 for 9 in 50 overs (Ilyas Afreedi 91 - 11x4, 6x6, Qasim Ali 80 - 3x4, 8x6, Iftikhar Ahmed 72 - 8x4, Bilal al Balushi 4-62, Munthir al Balushi 2-35) beat OCT Muscat 205 for 8 in 50 overs (Khalid al Balushi 63 - 4x4, Noofal al Adawi 37 - 5x4, Toseef Ul-Hassan 2-22, Punit Mehta 2-31, Rajesh Devashya 2-37) by 125 runs.

Rahul steers LC Tech to victory
Rahul Rajeev led the way with an elegant half century as LC Tech eased past OCT Seeb in a 30-over B Division clash at Muscat Municipality ground 1 on Friday.

Brief Scores (B Division 30 overs): Oct Seeb 169 for 9 in 30 overs (Issa Abdul Rahim 58 - 4x4, 4x6, Abbas al Balushi 42 - 5x4, Shameer Kariadan 2-23, Rauf Abdul 2-31, Rajesh Shetty 2-33) lost to LC Tech 172 for 3 in 18.1 overs (Rahul Rajeev 53 - 8x4, Jaleel Mahmood 50 - 8x4, Ashok Patel 30 - 7x4) by 7 wickets.

Amjad bats Zubair to big win
In another B Division game, Amjad Mohammed's hurricane 64 off 29 and Mubashar Iqbal's 4 for 20 were the highlights of Zubair CT's comfortable 81-run victory against OCT Al Hail A at Muscat Municipality ground 2.

Amjad's entertaining knock included 8 fours and 4 sixes while Saleem Khan contributed 49 off 36 as Zubair scored 234 all out in the 27th over.

Brief Scores (B Division 30 overs): Zubair 234 all out in 26.1 overs (Amjad Mohammed 64 - 8x4, 4x6, Saleem Khan 49 - 7x4, N Ghulam 3-30, Suhaib Abdul Ghani 3-47, Abdul Ghani al Balushi 2-38) beat Oct Al Hail 'A' 153 all out in 29 overs (Ismail Ghulam al Balushi 43 - 4x4, 2x6, Mubashar Iqbal 4-20, Abdul Aziz Mir 3-18, F Khan 2-35) by 81 runs

Labuschagne, Smith steer Australia to ominous lead over India

SYDNEY: First innings heroes Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith steered Australia to an commanding 197-run lead in the high-stakes third Test on Saturday, leaving an injury-hit India with a mountain to climb.

They came to the crease after Will Pucovski and David Warner fell early, pushing them to 103 for two at stumps and a strong position with the four-Test series locked at 1-1.

Labuschagne, who scored 91 in the first innings, was not out on 47 and Smith, who blitzed 131 in his first knock, unbeaten on 29.

Australia padded up again after taking eight wickets on day three to dismiss India for 244 in reply to the hosts' 338.

"I woke up today hoping that by the close of play we still wouldn't be bowling and to have a lead of near 200, a great day," said Australian pace spearhead Pat Cummins, who took 4-29.

"I think we need (to bat) for at least a session-and-a half, two sessions tomorrow and then have a good crack at them."

India's Cheteshwar Pujara, who made a patient 50, said early wickets would be crucial for his team on Sunday.

"We need to pick up a couple of early wickets tomorrow morning and not allow them free runs in the first session," he said.

India's task was made harder by the absence of key spinner Ravindra Jadeja, who was sent for scans after a hit to the thumb while batting. Wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant joined him in the clinic after a nasty blow to the elbow.

It piled more misery on India, who were already without injured bowlers Mohammed Shami, Umesh Yadav and Ishant Sharma and batsman KL Rahul, while skipper Virat Kohli is on paternity leave.

Despite this, Mohammed Siraj stepped up to remove Pucovski for 10, caught by substitute keeper Wriddhiman Saha.

Ravi Ashwin then took the prized scalp of David Warner for 13, his ninth career dismissal of the opener, trapping him lbw.

But the disciplined Labuschagne and Smith steadied



Australia's Pat Cummins celebrates his wicket of Indian captain Ajinkya Rahane on day three of the third Test at Sydney Cricket Ground. — AFP

SCOREBOARD	
Australia first innings: 338 India first innings (O/n: 96/2)	5-195, 6-195, 7-206, 8-210, 9-216.
R Sharma c&b Hazlewood.....26	Bowling: Starc 19-7-61-1, Hazlewood 21-10-43-2, Cummins 21-4-10-29-4, Lyon 31-8-87-0, Labuschagne 3-0-11-0, Green 5-1-12-0.
S Gill c Green b Cummins.....50	Australia second innings
C Pujara c Paine b Cummins.....50	D Warner lbw Ashwin.....13
A Rahane b Cummins.....22	W Pucovski c Saha b Siraj.....10
H Vihari (run out).....4	M Labuschagne (not out).....47
R Pant c Warner b Hazlewood.....36	S Smith (not out).....29
R Jadeja (not out).....28	Extras (LB-1, NB-3).....4
R Ashwin (run out).....10	Total (For 2 wkts, 29 overs).....103
N Saini c Wade b Starc.....4	Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-35.
J Bumrah (run out).....0	Bowling: Bumrah 8-1-26-0, Siraj 8-2-20-1, Saini 7-1-28-0, Ashwin 6-0-28-1.
M Siraj c Paine b Cummins.....6	
Extras (LB-1, W-5, NB-2).....8	
Total (all out, 100.4 overs).....244	
Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-85, 3-117, 4-142,	

the ship, building a threatening 68-run partnership that is slowly taking the game away from India.

CRUMBLE

India were all out just before tea after some scintillating bowling and razor-sharp fielding, having resumed at the Sydney Cricket Ground on 96 for two.

Cummins snared Pujara while Josh Hazlewood removed a dangerous Pant after a breezy 36.

The pair's downfall saw the team crumble, with Ashwin and Jasprit Bumrah both run out, joining Hanuma Vihari who suffered the same fate earlier in the day.

A cautious Pujara began the day on nine and captain Ajinkya

I woke up today hoping that by the close of play we still wouldn't be bowling and to have a lead of near 200, a great day

PAT CUMMINS
Australian bowler

Rahane two after Hazlewood and Cummins dismissed openers Rohit Sharma (26) and Shubman Gill (50) on Friday.

Rahane, who scored a century in the last Test at Melbourne, had an escape on 16, with a Nathan Lyon delivery ballooning to Matthew Wade at short leg, who could only get his fingertips on the ball.

The skipper then whacked Lyon for six before his new-found aggression cost him his wicket, chopping a Cummins ball onto his stumps in the next over.

Pujara did what he does best, grinding out singles while occasionally opening his bat, bringing up his 26th half-century.

But the celebrations were short-lived, with Pant out two balls later, edging a Hazlewood delivery to Warner at slip.

And it got worse when Pujara was removed in the next over, gloving a rising Cummins ball to wicketkeeper Tim Paine.

"They bowled a good line and length and it wasn't easy... it's not easy to score runs so you need to spend a lot of time at the crease and wait for the loose ball to come," Pujara said.

India slumped, with Ashwin slow off the mark for a single and Cummins alert, making a quick throw to Labuschagne standing at the stumps. It followed Vihari being brilliantly run out before lunch, attempting a run that wasn't there, with Hazlewood diving and throwing the ball in one movement. Bumrah became the third run out of the day, courtesy of a lightning-fast Labuschagne. — AFP

Indian players allegedly suffer racial abuse from crowd



Indian players celebrate the wicket of Will Pucovski of Australia, caught behind off a Mohammed Siraj delivery. — Reuters

SYDNEY: India's players were allegedly subjected to racial abuse from a section of the crowd at the Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) in the third Test against Australia on Saturday, local media reported.

India captain Ajinkya Rahane and other senior players spoke to the umpires at the end of the third day's play after quicks Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj complained of hearing racist slurs while fielding near the boundary rope, the reports said.

India batsman Cheteshwar Pujara did not answer when asked

about the matter at the end-of-day news conference.

COUNTERPART

Reuters was unable to confirm if the Indian cricket board (BCCI) had officially lodged a complaint with its Cricket Australia counterpart. The two boards and the International Cricket Council (ICC) did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

"We've come to know about the issue," BCCI vice-president Rajeev Shukla told Indian news agency ANI. "Cricket is

a gentleman's game and these kinds of things are not allowed or accepted."

According to the ICC anti-discrimination policy, the host board would have to probe any incident relating to 'inappropriate conduct' and submit a report to the world governing body within two weeks.

A man was banned from attending cricket matches in New Zealand for two years after being found guilty of abusing England fast bowler Jofra Archer during a 2019 tour. — Reuters

Mitchell stars as Jazz surprise Bucks at home

LOS ANGELES: Donovan Mitchell scored 32 points as the Utah Jazz handed Giannis Antetokounmpo's Bucks their first loss at home this season with a 131-118 victory in Milwaukee on Friday night.

Jordan Clarkson added 26, Bojan Bogdanovic chipped in 20 points, while Royce O'Neale added 18 points for the Jazz, who made a franchise record 25 three pointers and snapped a two-game losing skid.

Mike Conley finished with a double-double, delivering 17 points and 10 assists.

Antetokounmpo scored 35 points and Khris Middleton added 31 to lead Milwaukee but their offensive prowess wasn't enough to prevent the Bucks from dropping their first game at home in the new season.

Antetokounmpo scored 16 of his 35 points in the first quarter.

Once they got going there was no stopping the Jazz offence as they pulled away for good behind a 12-0 run to open the fourth quarter.

Mitchell had back-to-back jumpers to fuel the run and Rudy Gobert scored in close to cap it off and give the Jazz a 116-96 lead with 7:18 left on the clock.

Meanwhile, Jerami Grant had 31 points and 10 rebounds as the Detroit Pistons stormed back from a 23-point first half deficit to beat the Phoenix Suns 110-105 in overtime in Detroit.

Grant has been red-hot lately as his 31 points equalled a career high which he established on Wednesday against the Milwaukee Bucks.

Delon Wright finished with 16 points, five rebounds and six assists and Blake Griffin also had 16 points for the Pistons who scored the first six points of overtime. Devin Booker led the Suns with 23 points and former Piston Langston Galloway had 17. DeAndre Ayton added 14 points and 12 rebounds, while Dario Saric had 12 points and Chris Paul tallied 11 points, seven rebounds and nine assists.

The Suns were clinging to a 76-72 lead entering the fourth quarter. Cameron Johnson's dunk with 9:16 remaining gave Phoenix an 80-74 lead.

The Pistons took a one-point lead with 2:37 left when Griffin made a hook shot. Johnson answered with a three-pointer off a Paul pass.

Jordan Clarkson added 26, Bojan Bogdanovic chipped in 20 points, while Royce O'Neale added 18 points for the Jazz, who made a franchise record 25 three pointers and snapped a two-game losing skid



Utah Jazz' Rudy Gobert (27) shoots against Milwaukee Bucks' Giannis Antetokounmpo (34) at the Bradley Center. – USA Today Sports

Liverpool survive scare from virus-hit Villa in FA Cup

LONDON: Liverpool survived a scare from coronavirus-ravaged Aston Villa to reach the FA Cup fourth round with a 4-1 win against opponents missing their entire first-team squad as the pandemic wreaks havoc on English football.

Villa fielded a raw side comprised entirely of youth academy players and were without boss Dean Smith after being hit hard by a COVID-19 outbreak earlier this week.

In all, 14 unnamed Villa employees — nine players and five staff — have tested positive, forcing the Premier League club to close their training base on Thursday because of the outbreak.

Liverpool played a strong side for the third round tie at Villa Park, but Villa's youngsters acquitted themselves well.

Four of Villa's starting line-up weren't even born when Liverpool midfielder James Milner made his professional debut for Leeds in 2002.

But they gave Liverpool a shock



Liverpool's Mohamed Salah reacts. – Reuters

when Louie Barry cancelled out Sadio Mane's opener.

Eventually, the Premier League champions' class told with a blitz of three goals in five minutes in the second half.

Georginio Wijnaldum struck before Mane and Mohamed Salah sealed a first win in four games in all competitions for Jurgen Klopp's side.

"The kids did really well," Klopp said. "We had problems in passing and moving. Too many on the wrong side of the ball, not enough recoveries of passes. "We had chances and shot directly at the goalie. It was rusty but better in the second half. We have a lot of players with no rhythm."

Mark Delaney, the Villa



Liverpool's Neco Williams in action with Aston Villa's Brad Young. – Reuters

Under-23 coach deputising for Smith, added: "We are all very proud as a club, as coaches and players. That was a monumental effort considering what the players have had to go through."

That Villa, whose team had an average age of 18 and 294 days, ended the night with their heads held high was all the more remarkable given their

CEO Christian Purslow's frank pre-match assessment. "Our experience of this situation in the past two days has been a frightening scenario because we went from 100 per cent negative on 1 January to 14 cases," Purslow told BT Sport.

"Many of the players tonight are so young their mums and dads will be dropping them off at Villa Park"

There are growing concerns over whether the Premier League season can be completed on time as the new virus variant plagues Britain. The FA Cup has not escaped the chaos and Southampton's third round tie against Shrewsbury on Sunday has been postponed after several positive tests at the League One team.

Derby's first-team squad will miss their tie at Chorley on Saturday because of a virus outbreak. A record-high 40 positive tests were detected among top-flight players and staff in the week between December 28 and January 3 and four Premier League games have already been postponed this term.

The English Football League, which oversees the three divisions below the Premier League, reported 112 positive tests on Friday. Newcastle boss Steve Bruce and Leeds manager Marcelo Bielsa claim there is a moral argument to suspend all matches after the latest national lockdown ordered by the government.

— AFP

Business evaluation: Auto repair workshop — Part 1

People used to say that the three best friends you can have are a doctor, a lawyer, and an auto mechanic.

The doctor keeps you healthy, the lawyer keeps you safe and the auto mechanic keeps you going.

I was blessed with an amazing Italian doctor for most of my — mostly healthy — life. My lawyer is phenomenal, but I truly only appreciated the importance of an auto mechanic when I moved to Oman.

I remember one day when I brought my Jaguar to his workshop for repair and I was complaining about having to replace my radiator.

He looked at me with sympathy, then looked behind him at the various Porsche, BMW and Mercedes Benz waiting to be fixed. He then told me: “My friend, this is the Middle East... cars break down.”

Indeed the weather in the GCC is a “car killer”, especially if we look at it from the point of view of us paying for the repair... it can get very expensive quite quickly.

But what about the other side of the coin? Is it profitable to run a car repair business nowadays?

Everything we own needs some



STEFANO VIRGILLI
stefano@virgili.com

MILLENNIALS ARE ONE OF THE LARGEST PROJECTED CONSUMERS OF CARS, AND THEY PREFER TO LEASE FROM THE DEALERSHIP OR USE RIDESHARE SERVICES

degree of maintenance once in a while including cars. Over 90 per cent of Omani households own automobiles.

So, we can safely say that this business is here to stay. Lacking local data, I have asked my friend Bharat R Kanodia to provide me with some numbers and figures from his market of specialisation, the USA.

According to Bharat there are over 260,000 auto repair shops in America, employing over half a million people, and generating revenues in excess of \$70 billion every year. 80 per cent of such shops are privately owned by individuals.

In order to understand the business value it is important to understand the customer mindset and the evolution of the product.

In the USA there are four trends that are reshaping this business. We will see two of them in this article.

Leasing versus Buying

Millennials are one of the largest projected consumers of cars, and they prefer to lease from the dealership or use rideshare services.

If they lease, the services and repairs are also done at the

dealership. This might take a longer period of time to happen in the Middle East, given the lower price of vehicles, but in the long run, especially after many jobs were lost during the pandemic, it is not completely unimaginable that consumers will be more careful with the investment on their favourite 4 wheels.

So, one point in favour of the car repair business.

Cars last longer

Useful lives of cars have increased dramatically allowing people to retain cars longer, requiring more service, repairs, and parts for older cars.

This is certainly one point down for the car repair industry. However, in some regions such as the GCC, repair parts are not readily available, therefore the workshop can apply higher margins.

So, let us count this as half point down instead.

In the next part of the article, we will see the other 2 trends and 4 tips to make the business more appealing and profitable.

(The writer is a member of the International Press Association)

Passenger demand recovery grinds to a halt in November

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, JAN 9

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that the recovery in passenger demand which had been slowing since the Northern hemisphere's summer travel season, came to a halt in November 2020.

Middle Eastern airlines' demand plummeted 86.0 per cent in November year-to-year, which was improved from an 86.9 per cent demand drop in October. Capacity fell 71.0 per cent, and load factor declined 37.9 percentage points to 35.3 per cent.

Total demand (measured in revenue passenger kilometres or RPKs) was down 70.3 per cent compared to November 2019, virtually unchanged from the 70.6 per cent year-to-year decline recorded in October. November capacity was 58.6 per cent below previous year levels and load factor fell 23.0 percentage points to 58.0 per cent, which was a record low for the month.

International passenger demand in November was 88.3 per cent below November 2019, slightly worse than the 87.6 per cent year-to-year decline recorded in October.

Capacity fell 77.4 per cent below previous year levels, and load factor dropped 38.7 percentage points to 41.5 per



TRAVEL SETBACKS:
Middle Eastern airlines' demand plummeted 86.0 pc in Nov year-to-year

cent. Europe was the main driver of the weakness as new lockdowns weighed on travel demand.

Recovery in domestic demand, which had been the relative bright spot, also stalled, with November domestic traffic down 41.0 per cent compared to the prior year (it stood at 41.1 per cent below the previous year's level in October). Capacity was 27.1 per cent down on 2019 levels and the load factor dropped 15.7 percentage points to 66.6 per cent.

“The already tepid recovery in air travel demand came to a full stop in November. That's because governments responded to new outbreaks with even more severe travel restrictions and quarantine measures. This is clearly inefficient.

PRESS RELEASES

EXCLUSIVE 3-IN-1 OFFER FROM ALIZZ ISLAMIC BANK

Alizz Islamic Bank recently announced a new finance scheme with discounted profit rates and longer tenure for its customers, as well as special profit rates for employees of Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and The Royal Oman Police.

The '3-in-1 Combo' provides customers with a reduced profit rate with their home, vehicle and goods financing, which can be further reduced if the customer also applies for Alizz Islamic Banks Sharia Complaint Credit Card.

The Credit card which is considered the most affordable in the market is packed with features that will help customer plan their finances, make payments and earn cash back on those payments. In 2021, the users of Alizz Islamic credit cards will get a 2.5 per cent cash back on groceries purchased every Friday, and fuel expenses for the entire 12 months, which will be paid back on a monthly basis, further adding to the savings that



they can earn every month.

The new finance scheme which has been launched at the beginning of this year will continue until end of March 2021. For more details on the profit rates and the '3-in-1 Combo' offer, visit the bank's website or get in touch with the bank's 24/7 call centre on 800 7 2265.

BANK MUSCAT HANDS OVER GREEN SPORTS FIELDS IN AL DHAHIRAH



Bank Muscat recently inaugurated 3 football fields as part of its Green Sports programme to teams in Al Dhahirah Governorate. In line with the bank's commitment to youth empowerment and community development, the bank celebrated the handover of a naturally greened field to the Dhahir Al Fowars team in the Wilayat of Yanqul in Al Dhahirah.

The event was held in the presence of Khalid bin Khalifa al Farsi, the team manager. The bank also celebrated the opening of the naturally greened field of the Al Suleif Sport Team in the Wilayat of Ibri. The handover was attended by Hamdan bin Sulayem al Mandhari the team manager and other officials.

COLLECTION OF JAPANESE BOOKS DONATED TO GUTECH



MUSCAT: Kobayashi Toshinori, Ambassador of Japan to the Sultanate of Oman, paid a visit to Dr Hussain Sulaiman al Salmi, CEO of Oman Educational Services LLC and Acting Rector of German University of Technology (GUTech) in Muscat, and handed over a collection of books on Japanese literature and art, among other Japanese textbooks for learners and so on. These books were donated by the Japan Foundation.



MSM WEEKLY REVIEW

MSM closes higher on budget announcement

MSM30 Index ended the week up by 1.11 per cent. All sectors ended positively. The Financial Index ended the highest and up by 1.41 per cent. Industrial Index was higher by 0.86 per cent and the services Index was up by 0.38 per cent. The MSM Shariah Index rose by 0.32 per cent.

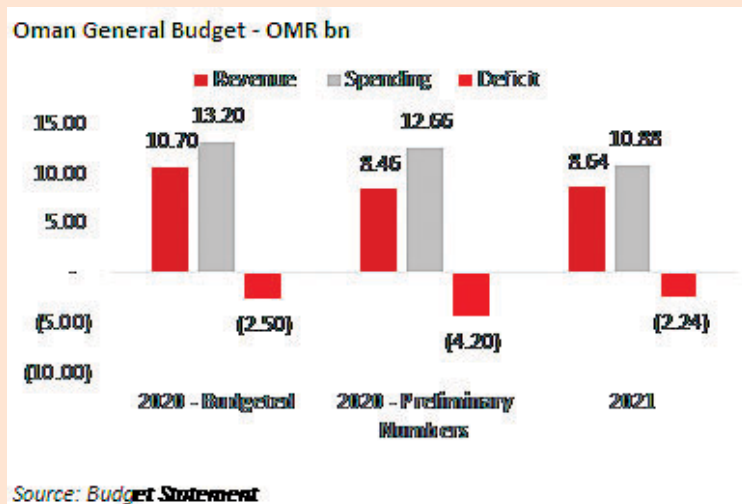
His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued Royal Decree No 5/2021 converting Muscat Securities Market (MSM) into a closed joint stock company under the name 'Muscat Stock Exchange Company SAOG'.

Ownership of the new entity is transferred to Oman Investment Authority (OIA).

Sweets of Oman has disclosed that they have appointed an independent auditor to review the misstatements of the financial statements for the 2Q2020. The company is currently formulating a business plan to overcome the situation and have taken legal action against the employees who have caused the misstatement of the financial statement. The accumulated losses of the company stand at RO 4.52 million.

Oman Fisheries announced that it has transferred 24 per cent of its share capital held by Oman Food Investment Holding Company to Fisheries Development Oman (FDO).

Ahli Bank disclosed direct and indirect exposure to Drake & Scull International. While it does not have direct exposure to the company, it has indirect



exposure of RO 4.4 million (0.16 per cent of the bank's total assets) to Drake & Scull's Omani JV sanctioned to fund local projects.

The bank has adequate provisioning coverage towards the exposure. Sohar International Bank also announced indirect exposure to Drake & Scull International's Omani JV partner to the tune of RO 6.5 million, 0.18 per cent of total assets

Oman Future Telecommunications received a licence to provide Class 1 telecom services.

The partnership between the Oman Future Telecommunications Company and Vodafone enables the third telecom operator to join Vodafone Partner Markets, providing it access to a full range of resources, services and expertise.

The shareholders of the Oman Future Telecommunications Company represent Omani institutions such as government

pensions and investment funds, as well as private investors. Prior to its launch, Vodafone has established several partnerships with local and international companies including small and medium enterprises.

The Omani government announced budget for the year 2021. Revenue is projected at RO 8.6 billion in 2021, based on assumed oil price of \$45 per barrel, up by 2 per cent as compared with the preliminary results of 2020.

As a result of fiscal and economic measures implemented in 2020 and economic diversification efforts including subsidy reforms to be implemented in 2021, public spending is estimated to be at RO 10.88 billion in 2021, decreased by 14 per cent as compared with the expected spending of RO 12.66 billion in 2020.

2021 Budget deficit is estimated at about RO 2.2 billion i.e. 8 per cent of gross domestic production (GDP).

(Courtesy: U-Capital)



Biden to unveil trillions in economic relief spending

WILMINGTON: US President-elect Joe Biden said Americans need more economic relief from the coronavirus pandemic now and that he will deliver a plan costing “trillions” of dollars this week.

Biden, introducing several members of his economic team, spoke on Friday after data showed the US economy lost jobs for the first time in eight months in December as a resurgent COVID-19 pandemic shuttered restaurants and other businesses.

He said the proposal includes relief for state and local governments grappling with the pandemic, as well as new support for people who lost their jobs or cannot afford rent.

Biden also called for raising the minimum wage to \$15, a campaign promise, and for sending out \$2,000 in direct cash payments. Democrats sought those cash payouts in the last relief bill, passed in December, but only were able to get



US President-elect Joe Biden speaks as he announces members of economics and jobs team at his transition headquarters in Wilmington. — Reuters

Republicans to agree to \$600.

“We need more direct relief flowing to families, small businesses, including finishing the job of getting people that

\$2,000 relief direct payment. \$600 is simply not enough,” he said.

Biden said he would unveil the plan on Thursday.

The Democrat, who takes office on January 20, emerged emboldened from a pair of Senate elections this week in Georgia that handed Democrats

Biden also called for raising the minimum wage to \$15, a campaign promise, and for sending out \$2,000 in direct cash payments

a majority in that chamber to complement control of the House of Representatives. The majorities could allow Biden to pass larger spending bills.

Biden’s initial plan was for a bill under \$1 trillion but he said on Friday that “economic research confirms that with conditions like the crisis today, especially with such low interest rates, taking immediate action — even with deficit financing — is going to help the economy.”

Speaking to reporters as he announced his nominees to head the Commerce and Labor departments, the president-elect said action was needed to help Americans get to the other

side of the health and economic crisis, and to “avoid a broader economic cost that exists out there, that will happen due to long term unemployment, hunger, homelessness and business failings.”

Markets have reacted quickly to expectations that government spending will rise since Democrats won the Georgia elections, with stock indexes rising and the interest investors demand on 10-year US Treasury bonds climbing to their highest levels since March.

Yet Republicans and even some Democrats may be resistant to greater deficit-fueled spending, with Sen Joe Manchin, a Democrat from West Virginia, among those who initially greeted the idea sceptically.

Biden’s transition team also said on Friday that they are looking into other economic relief actions they can take unilaterally, including extending a pause on repayments of federal student loans. — Reuters

Brash billionaire: Tesla CEO Musk is world’s wealthiest person

NEW YORK: Whether the topic is transforming the automobile or conquering the next frontier of space, Elon Musk has shown a knack for captivating an audience beyond investors and science geeks.

The brash Tesla CEO, now the world’s wealthiest person following the electric automaker’s meteoric rise, was the quintessential Silicon Valley disruptor — except he no longer lives in California.

The norm-shattering entrepreneur, who has more than 41 million followers on Twitter and a fortune now estimated at more than \$180 billion, announced last month he had relocated to Texas and could not resist one last dig at the West Coast state.

“If a team has been winning for too long, they do tend to get a little complacent, a little entitled, and then they don’t win the championship anymore”, Musk said at a conference hosted by the *Wall Street Journal*.

“California has been winning for a long time... and they are taking it for granted.” On Thursday, Musk surpassed Amazon Chief Executive Jeff Bezos as the world’s wealthiest person.

“How strange”, Musk said on Twitter when informed of the distinction. “Well, back to work...”



Musk, 49, was born in South Africa and holds passports from the US and Canada after completing his studies in Ontario and the state of Pennsylvania.

By 25, he had created Zip2, an online advertising platform, and was a millionaire by age 30 after selling the company to Compaq Computer in 1999.

He followed that success with the creation of the online bank, X.com, which was later merged into PayPal which eBay bought in 2002 for \$1.5 billion.

But Musk has entered a new stratosphere over the last few years as Tesla has grown and come closer to achieving a mission he said is not purely economic.

Tesla’s success is very important for the future of the world”, Musk

said in 2018. “It’s very important for all life on Earth.”

A linchpin of Musk’s larger goal of remaking transportation has been the Tesla Model 3, intended as its first vehicle aimed at the middle market rather than luxury.

After setting ambitious goals for the model’s ramp-up, Musk hit a rough spot in 2018 as Tesla missed targets while burning through cash. In an especially infamous moment, Musk in August 2018 jolted markets by announcing on Twitter that he was considering taking Tesla private and boasting he had “secured” financing for doing so.

Musk quickly dropped the go-private effort, but became embroiled in a bitter dispute with the Securities and Exchange

Musk has entered a new stratosphere over the last few years as Tesla has grown and come closer to achieving a mission he said is not purely economic

Commission (SEC), which charged Musk with fraud, slapped him with a \$20 million fine, and demanded he step down as Tesla chairman and agree to follow board-supervised protocols on his social media use.

Around the same time, Musk also publicly sparred with a British caver, who had mocked the Tesla CEO’s offer of a mini-submarine to rescue young soccer players trapped in a cave in Thailand in the summer of 2018.

The caver, Vernon Unsworth, sued Musk after the Tesla chief called him “pedo guy” on social media, but a California jury in December 2019 ruled the remark was not defamation.

But Musk — and Tesla — hit his stride in 2020, with the company impressively lifting output in California and Shanghai, breaking ground on new factories, and scoring a series of profitable quarters as its market value soared. — AFP

Airbus keeps top spot in coronavirus-blighted jet market



A view of the sign of civil aircraft manufacturing company Airbus on the facade of the headquarters in Montoir-de-Bretagne, western France. — AFP

PARIS: Europe’s Airbus posted stronger-than-expected deliveries of 566 jets in 2020, remaining the world’s largest planemaker as a year of pandemic-induced upheaval for air travel coincided with a grounding crisis at US rival Boeing.

Deliveries fell by 34 per cent from a record posted a year earlier, when travel demand was riding high on the increasing mobility of consumers in fast-growing markets across Asia.

Now, the aerospace industry is wrestling with the reluctance of most airlines to

take delivery of jets as they struggle to save cash, and a drop in air traffic that Airbus says could take until 2023 or 2025 to regain the pre-pandemic levels of 2019.

Still, Airbus said it had delivered 566 aircraft in 2020, exceeding estimates earlier in the year when the coronavirus crisis led to a lockdown of major travel markets.

“We can be cautiously optimistic for 2021... but challenges and uncertainties remain high”, Chief Executive Guillaume Faury told reporters. — Reuters

LONDON

Minister named chief of COP26 climate summit

British Business Minister Alok Sharma has been appointed to take care of the upcoming UN World Climate Conference COP26 in Glasgow, the government in London announced.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson named Sharma President of COP26, which is due to take place in Glasgow in November. In addition to his office in the Cabinet, Sharma had been responsible for preparing the summit since February last year.



“The biggest challenge of our time is climate change and we need to work together to deliver a cleaner, greener world and build back better for present and future generations”, Sharma said.

NEW YORK

Deutsche Bank to pay \$130m to settle US probes

Deutsche Bank will pay \$130 million to settle a foreign bribery probe and fraud charges in precious metals trading, US officials announced.

The bribery case relates to illegal payments and to false reporting of those sums on the bank’s books and records between 2009 and 2016, the Department of Justice said in a press release.

The bank “knowingly and wilfully” kept false records after employees conspired with a Saudi



consultant to facilitate bribe payments of over \$1 million to a decision maker, the DoJ said.

In another case, the bank paid more than \$3 million “without invoices” to an Abu Dhabi consultant”, the DoJ said. — AFP

LONDON

UK clothing giant Asos set to create 2,000 jobs

British online clothing retailer Asos unveiled plans to create 2,000 jobs over the next three years with the creation of a new warehouse in central England.

The facility, costing £90 million (\$123 million) will be located in Lichfield in Staffordshire, north of the city of Birmingham, Asos said in a statement.

“We’re thrilled to be laying down the foundations for our future growth”, said Chief Executive Nick Beighton.

He said the decision to invest



in additional infrastructure and create a large number of jobs reflects the company’s confidence in its future. — AFP

SHORT TAKES

WJ Towell Group Company

Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

ORBIT

Car Rental & Lease

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

Classifieds

For Advertisements
Please Contact with our Team:

Head Office
Mohd Al Rashdi
99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

Salalah Office
Bakhit Al Shihri
92998577
bakhit.omandaily@gmail.com

Nizwa Office
Abdullah Al Abri
99429094
nizwaofc@omandaily.net.om

Suhar Office
Musalam Al Saidi
99429192
sohardaily@outlook.com

AG Al Maashari
99639264
ali.maashari@omandaily.om

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
 24649593
24649595

Classified Section

SUNDAY JANUARY 10, 2021 JUMADA AL ULA 26, 1442 AH

Mohammed al Rashdi: 99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

Ali al Maashari: 99639264
ali.maashari@omandaily.om

Saada al Rashdi
95919344

94501166
 24649593
24649595

FOR RENT

SIT. VACANT

SIT. WANTED

FOR SALE/RENT

RENT A CAR

SERVICES

NEW family flats in Darsait near the beach, 5 bedrooms, hall with AC, 4 bathrooms, balcony with sea view, RO 450 per month. Contact: 99315986.

FLAT for rent. 98403020

FLAT for rent in Maabela 3 master rooms. 96088926.

FLATS 2 BHK and 1 BHK in Ghubra and Al Khuwair and Mumtaz. 99341138/ 90991079.

Good flat, one room with hall, one bathroom and kitchen, 2 split ACs, Ruwi and Al Khuwair and Wadi Al Kabir contact: 99358589 or 97079146 or 95570288.

2 BEDROOM flat Al Khuwair. 99322344.

FOR rent in Salalah, north Auqadain. Call 91711118.

NEW apartment for rent, one room, 2 toilets, kitchen and dinning. Location, Al Khoudh Market, Red Taj building, 7th floor. Per month rent RO 190/-. 92838118

WELL maintained 1&2 BHK and office space/ store available at Rex Road. Contact 92227165

NEW penthouse, N Ghubra — 2 bedroom + 3 toilets + 1 maid room with toilet and 1 big hall 99370300.

FLAT for rent at Al Khuwair 33, 4 bedrooms, majlis, 2 halls, kitchen and store. 99383446.

NEW apartment in Ruwi near church consists of 2 rooms with its facilities. Contact. 94664635, 95850345.

1BHK & 2 bhk flats for rent at Ruwi and Al Khoudh. 93994402, 93994403, 24834644.

3 BHK Flat & studio flat in central Ruwi & 2 BHK in Medinat Al Ilam. Call 99238012/ 24704994.

To Let 2&3 bedroom flat,18th November Road above Almandi Plate Restaurant, Ghubra south. 99024949/ 96002226.

FINANCE/ PARTNERSHIP Required for a running Beauty Parlour in Muscat. Interested can call/ Whatsapp: 79860425.

WE are urgently for AC & Auto electrician (car electrician) who can join immediately. Contact: 99677756.

SIT. WANTED

SMART Indian, excellent English, Arabic speaker, 17 years Oman experience in Airport, Hospital, Media EPC seeks Admin/ Hr/ Project coordinator/ Operations. 99283938.

CIVIL engineer/QS engineer, 11 years in UAE, freelance & Oman driving licence available, looking for full-time or part-time job 97299165.

SALES ENGINEER (PEB) B.Tech Mechanical with minimum 7 years of experience in Pre Engineered Steel Building (PEB) sales and marketing. Responsibility involves Technical discussion with the customers, preparing proposals, cost estimation and quotation. Valid GCC driving licence is a must. Contact: hrjob191@yahoo.com.

INDIAN Female Structural/Civil Engineer (B-Tech Civil), 18 years Gulf experience is seeking for suitable placement. Having valid visa and driving license. Ready to join immediately with necessary documents. Contact: 79858363.

SALES/Marketing/ retail executive BMS in Marketing. 6 years experience. Contact 93920174. Rehankadri91@hotmail.com

INDIAN driver with 10-year experience in sales, Rent A Car tours with own car needs suitable job. Well versed with Muscat routes in Oman and knowledge of Arabic English, Hindi, Malayalam. Kindly contact GSM 95037759

EXPERIENCE in outdoor Sales & Operations with Oman driving license, looking for suitable job opportunities in Sales/ Operations. Mobile: 79857155.

YOUNG experienced Pakistani driver with Omani light vehicle driving licence seeks suitable opening. Speaks Arabic, Hindi, English and familiar with interior and Muscat areas. Contact GSM 95856719.

ACC AVAILABLE

SINGLE room with attached bathroom and air-condition for executive bachelor, non-cooking, Wadi Kabir/ Al Falaj/ Ruwi High Street area. Contact 99657906

MANPOWER

MANPOWER from Philippines. Whatsapp: 91206344.

MECHANICAL engineer, 21, Indian male currently in Oman looking to work at any engineering field. Contact 96511338. Email: rkdhanush11@gmail.com

INDIAN male looking for the post of Sr Sales Executive with valid Omani licence. Contact 79285701.

LADY Indian English teacher with over 25 year experience, currently seeks full time position in colleges or training institutions. Responsibilities in English language teaching or soft skills trainer with preference for aviation sector. Possess valid Omani driving license. Contact GSM 92541510

FOR SALE

INSTITUTION Licence contact 95595512.

ALUMINIUM/UPVC Profiles & Accessories available for immediate sale at Ghala industrial area. please Contact: 98054895/98050355.

WE supply quantities of excellent mountainous soil in Bausher (suitable for compaction and filling) 99242445, 99327939.

A SHOWROOM in Al Qurum in strategic location with extravagant interior design on 280 sqm is offered for sale at RO 25,000. 92470024.

DIESEL Tanker, 1,600 gallon Volvo, 1987. 92836774

COLD store in Al Seeb for lease or sale. Contact: 94272979, 96252664.

NEW 3 storey villas for sale/ rents Wadi Kabir/ Al Khuwair), (Shops/offices for rent/ Al Khuwair) (Flats for rent/ Wadi Kabir). 96596348.

To receive news updates from Oman Observer,

WhatsApp <your name> to 96473232

INVESTMENT

AN organic jaggery (Al Harifayuh)1 manufacturing industry available for partnership or investment in Hubli India. 0091 9742421122.

FOR SALE OR LEASE

A STORE which can be made into a two-storey building, has a 350 sqm area.Contact 97811111.

BUYING

AL Awsad Modern llc, electronic and furniture used. 99834373.

We buy used and broken cars which have instalments in cash. 90202090.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement of Capital Reduction

A LEGAL translation office needs **Marketters**. Contact E-mail: oman4n@gmail.com

1. AC maintenance and servicing.

2. Fridge, washing machine and dish washer repairing.

3. Painting and cleaning services.

4. Electrical, plumbing and carpentry work 97014234, 99447257, 24290686.

ORIENT Trading llc, Shampooing, sofa, carpet, floor polishing. Old house repairing. 99834373.

AL SUMRI AC maintenance. We are ready to repair and install all types of Air-Conditioner within Muscat Governorate. 94301888.

Lands for Investment

Investors or investor partners are sought to invest in commercial, agriculture, industrial lands, existing factories, stores, farms, residential buildings and showrooms.

Abu Talal 91370519

مجموعة التسنيم
AL TASNIM GROUP

SUB-CONTRACTORS REQUIRED URGENTLY

Al Tasnim an excellent grade multi-discipline contracting company in Oman wishes to engage sub-contractors (excluding materials) in all trades including MEP works in major building and civil engineering projects in Muscat and outstations including Nizwa, Salalah, Suwaiq, Khasab, Sohar and Duqm. Interested companies and individuals are hereby invited to submit the information and preferred locations for undertaking sub-contract works to uditha.galapatha@altasnim.com within 07 days of this notice. Al Tasnim will provide all details of subcontract works and commence the selection of sub-contractors after receipt of the information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT : +968 91984614, +968 98083560

For Advertisements
Please Contact with our Team:

Head Office
Mohd Al Rashdi
99841230
m.alrahd86@yahoo.com

Salalah Office
Bakhit Al Shihri
92998577
bakhit.omandaily@gmail.com

Ali Al Maashari
99639264
wadi Almeeh@yahoo.com

Nizwa Office
Abdullah Al Abri
99429094
nizwaofc@omandaily.net.om

Suhar Office
Musalam Al Saidi
99429192
sohardaily@outlook.com

ANNOUNCEMENT

Distinctive AL Zofran projects Announce that they registered in the commercial register with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in the Secretariat of the Commercial Registry under No. 1277119 announce that they are in the process of transferring their legal form from a joint liability company to a limited liability company in accordance with Article No. (19) duplicate (2) of the Commercial Companies Law No. 74/ 4 and its amendments. Inform everyone who has an interest in this amendment and everyone who has objection to these amendments must submit the reasons for his objection to the Secretariat of the Commercial Registry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion within a period of two months from the date of publishing this announcement.

In accordance with the provisions of Article 150 of the Commercial Companies Law. The company **Stability Line Trading (LLC)**, which is registered with the Commercial Registration No **1010798**, hereby announces that it is going to reduce its capital from Omani Rials **100,000.000** to **25,000.000**. Whoever has any objection to the foregoing shall present the reasons for such objection to the Secretariat of Commercial Registry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion within 30 days from the date hereof.

Supply of Pesticides, Gel (crocroaches), Public Health chemicals, Agriculture chemicals, Snake repellent, Rodent baits and other insect repellent from UK & USA

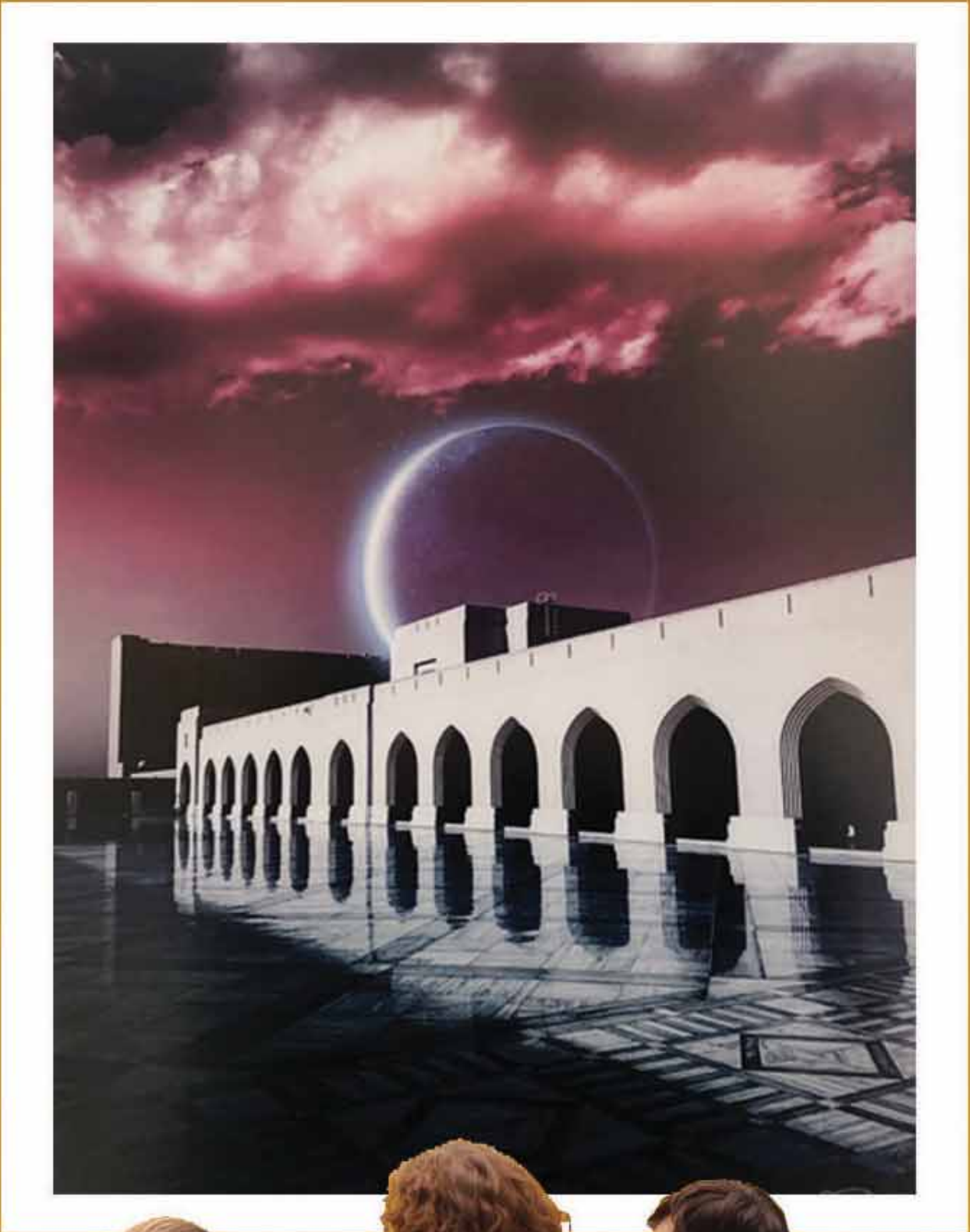
PROFESSIONALS in Pest Control Service, Bedbug Treatment, Rodent Treatment, Snake Treatment and Termite Treatment [Pre & Post Construction]

Tel: 24787606, 24787503
Direct Line: 24786077
GSM: 99382355, 99172309
pcomctom@omantel.net.om
P.O. Box 565, Al Wadi Al Kabir 117, Sultanate of Oman

features

Branding an art style and dedicating it to charity

HH Meyyan Shihab Tariq Al Said launched her first solo exhibition last week in Muscat Mall, entitled “Fragments of Imagination”. Introducing her very own style she called Meyyanism, she’s finding an even deeper meaning for her work by dedicating it to charity to help others... **P18**



INSIDE STORIES

PHOTOGRAPHY



THE BEAUTY OF OMAN’S URBAN LANDSCAPE

If there's one country in the Middle East that perfectly balances nature and culture with progress and development, it's none other than the Sultanate of Oman... **Story on Page 20**

CONSERVATION



INDONESIAN BABY SEA TURTLES MAKE A BREAK FOR FREEDOM

Newly hatched, dozens of baby turtles flipped and flopped their way down a beach towards the crashing waves of the Indian Ocean, under the watchful gaze of conservationists at an Indonesian national park... **Story on Page 19**

READ



WUTHERING HEIGHTS

BY EMILY BRONTE

This harrowing story, set on a lonely English moorland, follows Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff's struggle with love, betrayal and revenge.

CHANGING WORLD



CLIMATE CHANGE HURTS CENTRAL AMERICAN COFFEE FARMS, SPURS MIGRATION

Harvest season had just begun in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, and the coffee plants stood ripe and ready. But there was no one working at many of the farms... **Story on Page 19**

CELEBRATE



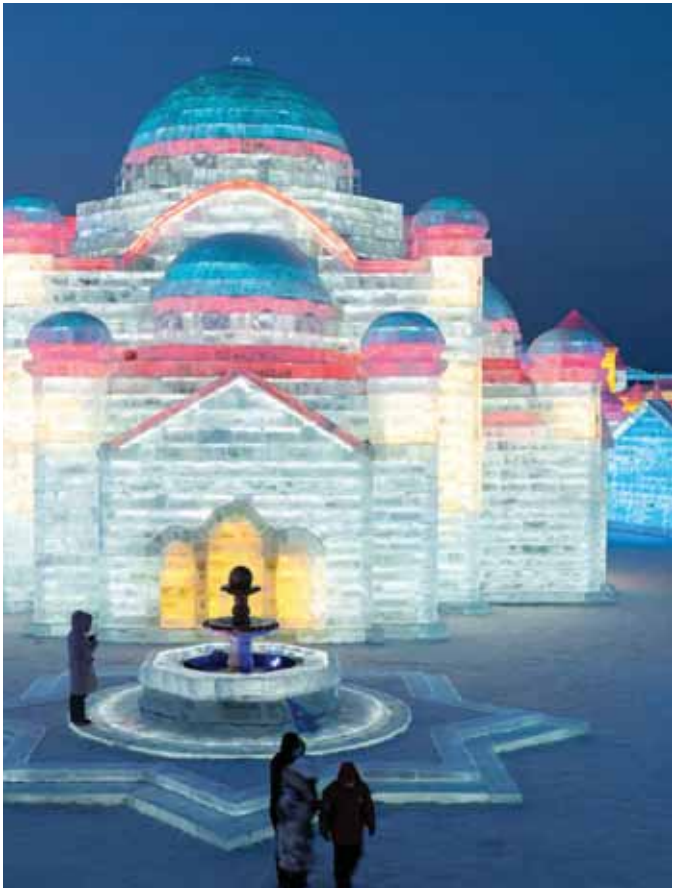
CUT YOUR ENERGY COSTS DAY

With Oman cutting off subsidy for electricity, both expats and citizens will definitely feel the pinch of growing prices. Cut Your Energy Costs Day is dedicated for awareness on how you can safely lower your bill. To celebrate today, make sure to check out some website and learn on how to properly save electricity at home.



TRAVEL TALES

Frozen towers and palaces stun visitors at Harbin ice festival

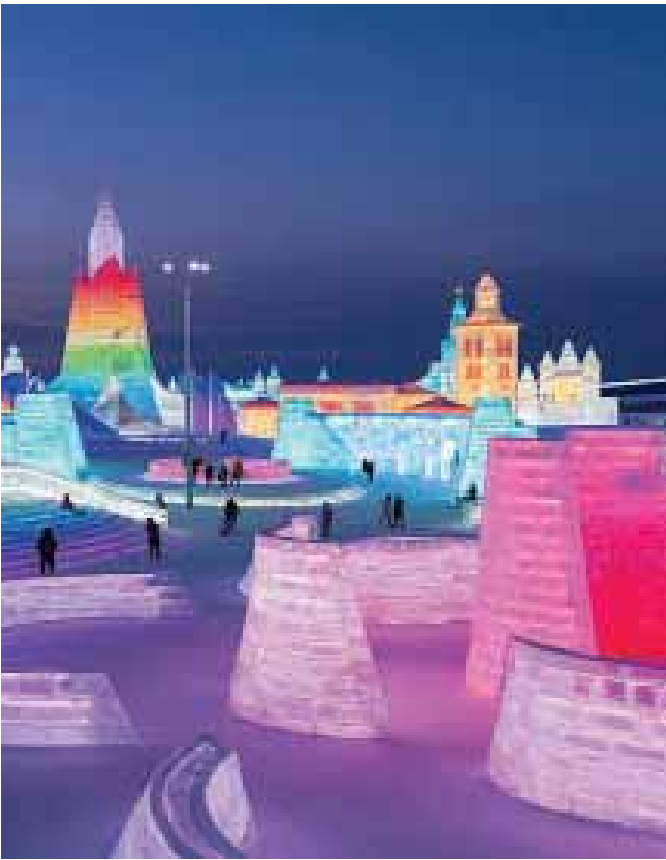


GIANT SNOW MAZES, illuminated frozen towers and crystal palaces etched from vast blocks of ice greeted visitors to China's annual ice festival in Harbin.

The frozen dreamscapes have drawn millions of visitors over the years to the wintery northeastern city, which opened the festival on Tuesday despite small COVID-19 outbreaks across China.

Preparations for the annual winter celebration begin weeks in advance, with workers mining millions of cubic feet of ice from the surface of the Songhua river over long, gruelling shifts.

Walls of ice carved into the shape of a giant flower were lit up on Tuesday night as the festival opened.



The 2022 Beijing Winter Games have inspired a push across China to promote winter sports and tourism, with the number of Chinese snow resorts increasing nearly four-fold in the past decade.

China has largely brought coronavirus infections under control domestically, with entertainment and cultural venues reopening and life largely returning to normal in recent months.

But small outbreaks in multiple cities have prompted authorities to step up testing and travel restrictions.

Visitors to this year's festival are required to show a "health code" on a contact-tracing app and have their temperatures measured before entering venues. — **AFP**

Branding an art style and dedicating it to charity

BY MAI AL ABRI

An artist can imagine endlessly, and what they can best put on a blank canvas are fragments of those imaginations.

"This is what I try to capture in my works of art; fragments of my own imagination and creation escaping this world and taking you into another. My art is a reflection of the beauty I see around me from nature and everyday", said HH Meyyan Shihab Tariq Al Said while launching her first solo exhibition last week in Muscat Mall, entitled "Fragments of Imagination".

The exhibition includes 30 artworks combining digital art and photography.

"After a few years of mastering the art of photography and digital art, I have decided to compile my best works for displaying in my first solo exhibition. My art style has developed throughout time into becoming more of surrealist's canvas of work where dreams, imagination and reality merge", she said.

"I love using an array of vivid colours that contrast yet complement each other in giving an ethereal feel to my artwork. For this exhibition, I have tried to categorise my artwork pieces into three main groups which are: Flowers, reflection and landscapes. Each focusing on a certain theme, but still the same artistic style that defines my work."

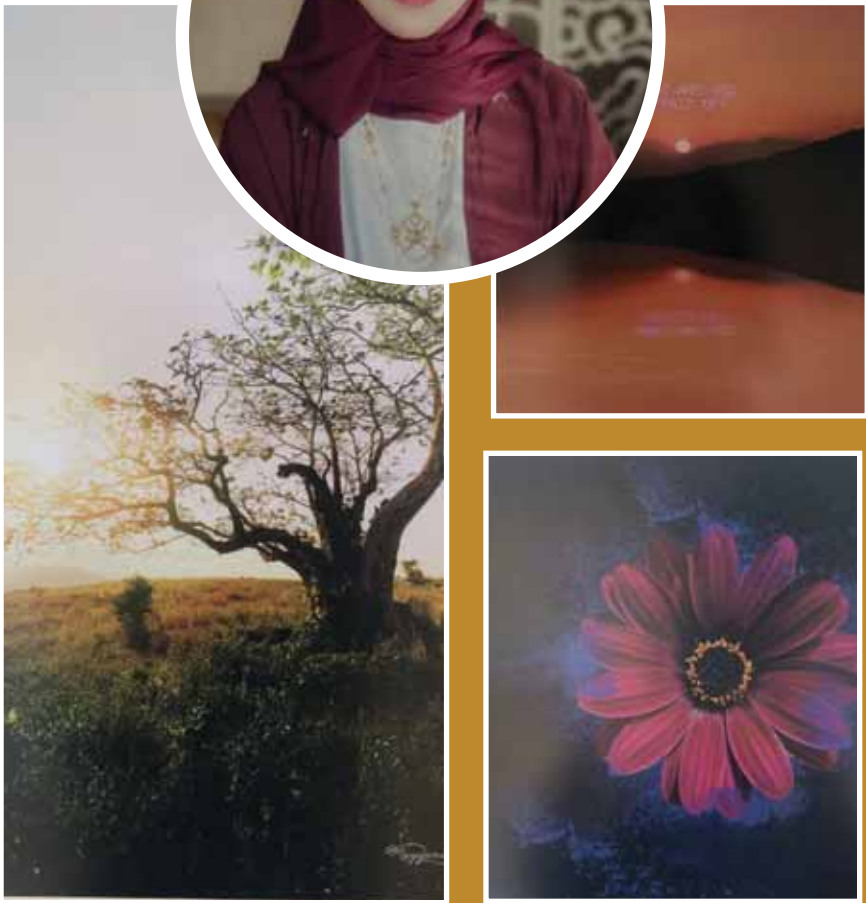
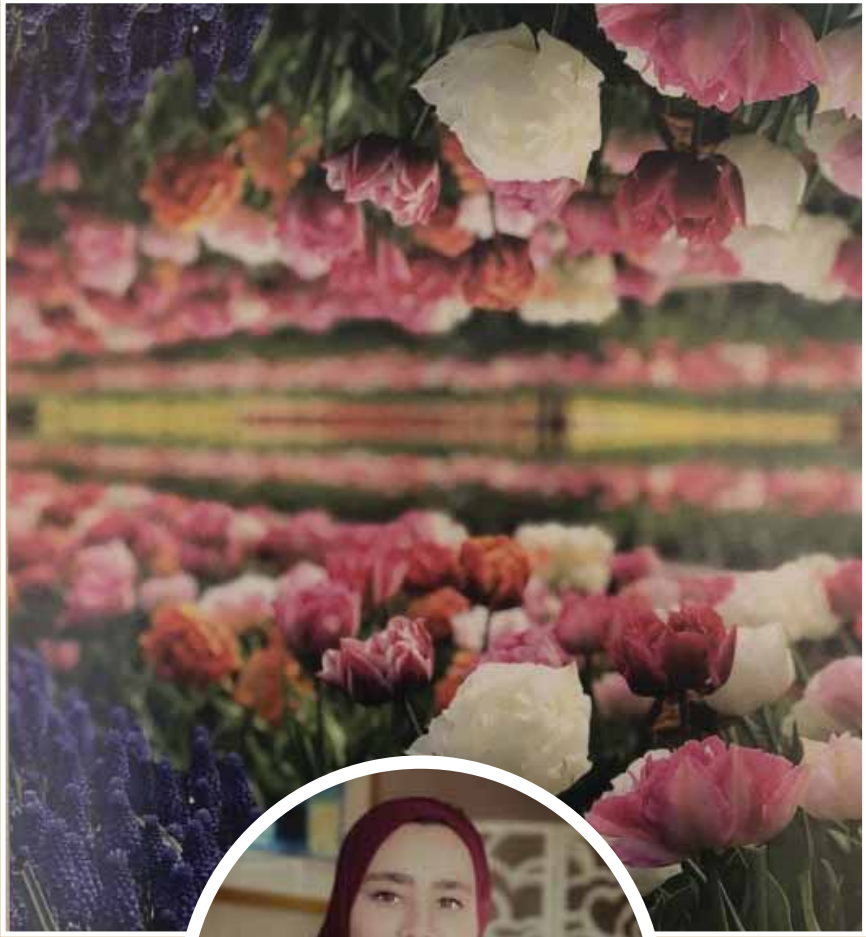
On her aspirations, Meyyan said, "My goal for this exhibition is to be the official launch for my personal art brand Meyyanism. I have decided to brand my artwork in order to portray what is unique about my art and about my style so that it is recognizable and can confidently stand out between other artistic styles out there. To start out this launch of my brand, and as the first solo exhibition I am aiming to sell all art pieces through a virtual auction on social media, and all profit made from this auction will directly go to Al Rahma Association for Motherhood and Childhood".

Virtual online learning and future academic endeavours. The display period for the artworks will be around a month, and at the end of this month, the auction will take place.

Professionally HH Meyyan is an interior designer and thus in the business of transforming spaces, her wide range of experience has had her serve on the design committee for many real estate projects in Oman such as W Hotel, Hilton Garden Inn Hotel and Al Sharq Master Development.

HH Meyyan is a member of the Photographic Society of Oman and has owned the "Best Photo Award" at the Female Photographers exhibition in 2016. In 2018, she was elected as the president of the Oman Design Society; which is still under development.

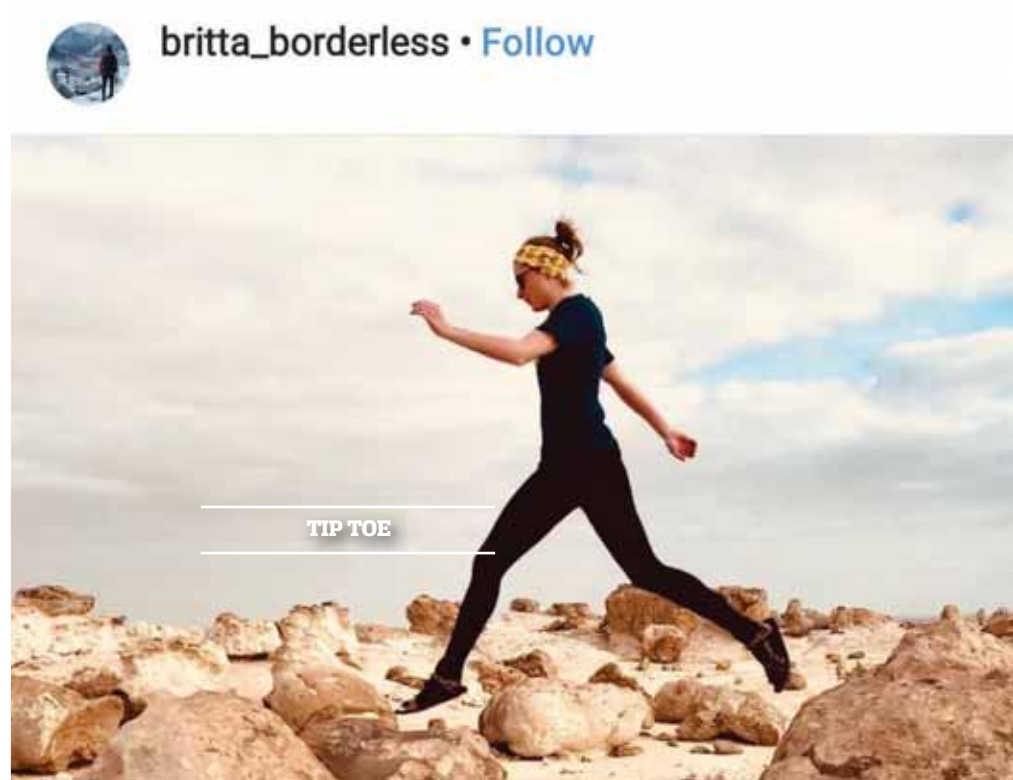
She was also chosen as a speaker in the IDF exhibition in 2020 to give design talk on hospitality interior design. Her artwork was featured and displayed in cafes, magazines, and multiple corporate publications.





find us on
TWITTER
Scan the QR Code or follow us on
www.twitter.com/omanobserver

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



SHARE A SLICE OF YOUR LIFE

We select three photos daily for our Instagram Top Picks of the Day. The rules are simple. Follow us on Instagram. Upload your photos. Tag us and use **#OmanObserver** and **#BeAnObserver**.



CHANGING WORLD

Get full stories online at www.omanobserver.om



Climate change hurts Central American coffee farms, spurs migration

Harvest season had just begun in Matagalpa, Nicaragua, and the coffee plants stood ripe and ready. But there was no one working at many of the farms. Joaquin Solorzano, a coffee farmer and advocate for Nicaraguan growers, point-

ed at the cherries on a cluster of coffee plants visible from the winding mountain highway that was eerily empty during the 2019 harvest. "Look, it's red," Solórzano said. "It should be picked, but no one is picking it right now because they won't get much money for it. Most of

the coffee falls."

With coffee production in other countries driving down prices and droughts and storms wreaking havoc, coffee farmers in Central America have had to make tough choices in recent years.

Coffee is one of the many industries around the world feeling the pressures of climate change. And, as people lose their livelihoods, access to food or even their homes, climate change is becoming a larger impetus for forced migration.

US immigration laws aren't equipped to grapple with whether some one fleeing the effects of climate change should be given refuge.

But as those effects worsen, the United States is already seeing Central American coffee workers arrive at the border and ask for help. The disappearance of coffee workers can have a ripple effect on other jobs in a region, leading to even more displacement.

"All of the north of the country depends on coffee — the economy depends on coffee cultivation," said Aura Lila Sevilla Kuan, former president of the Asociación de Cafetaleros de Matagalpa in Nicaragua.

Droughts weakened the Nicaraguan coffee harvest in 2016 and 2017, and the drier-than-usual soil meant that, when rain did come, it damaged the plants, Solorzano said. Owners

went into debt because the harvests yielded less than what they had invested.

Now they are stuck in a cycle of shrinking their production to try to make ends meet. Unemployed Nicaraguan coffee workers most often migrate to near by Costa Rica, though some have tried coming to the United States. Coffee workers in Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala more often choose to head north rather than south.

Balbino Pais, manager of Finca Las Colinas, a younger farm in the Matagalpa area, said he's heard from workers who have left that wages are better in Costa Rica, but many return because they can't find year-round jobs. Miguel Martinez, who had nearly a decade of experience working coffee farms, tried working in Costa Rica and El Salvador before giving up and coming back to Nicaragua. He eventually found work with Pais.

Coffee farming requires intense manual labour. The cherries are generally hand-picked, with workers harvesting the plants several times during a season. Workers carry heavy bags of coffee on their backs over the mountainous terrain to be weighed and transported for drying. Workers are generally paid based on how much coffee they pick, some making as little as 5 or 6 dollars per day. — **TCA/dpa**

CONSERVATION

Indonesian baby sea turtles make a break for freedom

NEWLY HATCHED, dozens of baby turtles flipped and flopped their way down a beach towards the crashing waves of the Indian Ocean, under the watchful gaze of conservationists at an Indonesian national park.

Small enough to fit into the palm of a hand, some ended up on their backs, wriggling their tiny flippers helplessly as they tried to get back on track.

But the conservationists did not interfere, as they wanted the creatures to "map" their surroundings and then return to lay eggs decades later.

"Sea turtles mature at 25 years old, so if they're released today, we'll probably meet them again 25 years from now," said Ardhini Estu Wardana, a forest ranger at Meru Betiri National Park on the eastern edge of Java.

Its beaches are nesting grounds for several species of turtle.

The night before, a giant female — over a metre (3.3 feet) long — laid more than 160 eggs on the shore, sweeping mounds of sand over them to protect them from predators.

Turtles, under threat from poaching and habitat destruction, are protected under Indonesian law.

Their eggs are considered a delicacy and they are also slaughtered for their meat, skin and shells.

Six of the world's seven turtle species can be found in Indonesia, an archipelago of more than 17,000 islands and home to a dizzying array of exotic wildlife. — **AFP**





The beauty of Oman's urban landscape

PHOTOS BY SANAK ROY CHOUDHURY



IF THERE'S one country in the Middle East that perfectly balances nature and culture with progress and development, it's none other than the Sultanate of Oman. A trip to this country of peace takes you to a journey through time with its well-preserved villages, historic archaeological discoveries and now, beautifully designed modern buildings with architecture inspired by its dynamic landscape.

Sanak Roy Choudhury is an accomplished travel photographer more inclined and passionate about shooting landscapes, urban landscapes and architecture. Professionally, Sanak is a practising optometrist based in Muscat for the last 14 years. Perhaps influenced by the geometrical and physical optics of his daily routine, his passion for photography has yielded some of the best shots of Muscat.

Having completed a few distinctions such as EFIP (Excellence FIP) from Federation of Indian Photography and EFIAP (Excellence FIAP) from Federation internationale de L'art Photographique (Brussels), which is recognised by Unesco, Sanak shared that Muscat, with its beautiful lights, is a real beauty to photograph.

He said, "Colours have specific emotions and can help in storytelling. Photographs will radically increase in visual value by adding certain colours to provide certain emotions", he said. "Blue is very interesting because it can give a sense of alienation, of emotional coldness, of loneliness. Even frenetic energy makes people feel anxious, and if we use that for specific images, we will get a certain result of that cool cold aspect. The urban landscapes of Muscat allow for these emotions to come through to the photos," he added.

He also said that in any typical urban landscapes, "we are almost always going to get a guaranteed winner provided you know how to correctly blend exposures and understand tonal relationships of the colour."

FOLLOW ON INSTA: [@SANAK_ROYCHOUDHURY](https://www.instagram.com/sanak_roychoudhury)