

► NEWS BRIEF

OMAN PARTICIPATES IN GLOBAL TRAVEL SUMMIT

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - Oman is taking part in the 22nd World Travel and Tourism Council Global Summit in Riyadh, which runs till Thursday.

Oman's delegation is headed by H E Salim al Mahrouqi, Minister of Heritage and Tourism.

In a speech on Monday, he affirmed the significance of the sector in providing employment and underscored the need to lend enough support to local communities and the private sector so that they can engage in sustainable partnerships.

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**Sustainable City Yiti outlines
its commitment to Oman**

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**Iran frees hundreds after
World Cup win over Wales**

SAYYID BILARAB INAUGURATES AL TAYIB CITY



Sayyid Bilarab bin Haitham al Said inaugurated Al Tayib City (Liwa Model Residential City) on Monday in North Batinah. It was named 'Al Tayib' based on a directive of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik meaning 'the land that bears nothing but goodness'. The city is a comprehensive model for sustainable cities. Its development was accomplished through interactive participation among the government departments concerned and public service providers. Development of the city witnessed the direct participation of community members at all stages of planning and design (ONA)

Omran to review development of waterfront project in Muttrah

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In line with the directions of the Oman Investment Authority to review and evaluate the Mina Sultan Qaboos Waterfront Project, Omran Group will re-study the project and turn it into a world-class mixed-use tourist attraction.

Omran aims to develop it with a commitment to the specificity of the port site and the historical

and architectural heritage of the surrounding area, while providing tourism activities factoring in the local community.

A discussion on reinvigorating the project was held during the ninth meeting of Muscat Municipal Council on Monday, under the chairmanship of H E Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidi, Governor of Muscat and Chairman of Muscat Municipal Council.

The meeting delved on Omran's tourism projects being

implemented in the governorate.

"Omran will develop the Mina Sultan Qaboos Waterfront Project as a world-class facility to attract tourists," said Ammar Sulaiman al Kharusi, head of development at the group.

Kharusi added that Omran seeks to achieve the objectives of the National Tourism Strategy 2040 by increasing the number of jobs, increasing the contribution of tourism to the gross domestic product

from six to ten per cent, developing the local economy and more than a thousand small and medium enterprises, as well as improving the quality of tourism facilities.

According to Kharusi, Omran is implementing a number of tourism projects in Muscat, including Jebel Sifah, the Sustainable City Yiti, Muscat Bay, the Four Seasons Resort, a mixed-use project in Qurum, Madinat al Irfan and Al Mouj Muscat.

OCCI elects Rawas as chairman

Our Correspondent
Muscat



Faisal al Rawas

Members of the Board of Directors of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) have elected Faisal al Rawas as its chairman. The board also elected Rashid bin Amer al Muslehi as first vice-chairman and Hamoud bin Salem al Saadi as second vice-chairman.

Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Undersecretary for Commerce and Industry in the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and Chairman of OCCI's Election Committee, announced the results on Monday. The council members of the board were elected by secret ballot.

The board also elected Anwar Hamad bin Saeed al Sanani and Naif bin Hamid Fadel as members of the Executive Committee, Saud bin Ahmed Abdul Karim al Nahari, Zahir bin Muhammad al Kaabi and Saeed bin Ali al Abri as members of the Investment Committee, and Muhammad bin Nasser bin Muhammad al Maskari, Hussein bin Abdul-Hussein al Lawati and Mustafa Ahmed Salman as members of the Audit Committee.

While congratulating the council members of the board,

Masan emphasised the responsibility entrusted to them to contribute to the realisation of Oman Vision 2040. Membership of the new board will last till 2026.

Following the announcement, Rawas said, "The board of OCCI will ensure the principles of governance in all its branches by strengthening partnership between public and private sectors.

"The council will also strengthen communication with business owners and work on decentralisation of all its branches in the governorates in implementation of the directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik."

Elections to the board of OCCI concluded last week with a huge voter turnout witnessed at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre in Muscat and the chamber's branches across governorates.

Elections were conducted to elect 21 board members from 122 contestants for a period of four years (2022-2026).

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MUSCAT DAILY PRESENTS

2022
**OMAN'S MOST TRUSTED
BRAND AWARDS**

Local startup raises awareness on circular economy

Muscat - Local startup Carbon 6 hosted a series of workshops recently with an aim of raising awareness on circular economy.

The workshops included screening of a documentary, followed by moderated discussions. The sessions, which took place over the span of three weekends, targeted various industries including tourism and hospitality, energy, healthcare, sustainability and urban planning.

Explaining circular economy, Abeer Ali al Mukhaini, founder of Carbon 6, said, "It is a bio-

mimicry concept that is derived from nature. It's a model of production concept - the waste of one system is the energy of another, which is opposite of the current linear economy."

She explained that a circular economy has lower carbon emissions than a linear economy. "Producing new materials results in carbon emissions. Circular economies minimise the need for producing new materials by maximising the re-use of resources, thus eliminating the carbon costs of producing new materials, which is the aim of



reaching net zero emissions by 2050."

Carbon 6 is endeavouring to spread awareness in all segments of society focusing on the bottom-to-top approach to reduce the communication gap and "be more relatable to the community - youth, entrepreneurs, students, academics and the public in general", Abeer explained.

"We believe in the importance of community engagement, and spreading awareness and knowledge is one of our main activities."

Carbon 6 is a social ideation

startup founded in 2019. It was created with the aim of introducing social innovation to the community with an emphasis on sustainability. Its previous initiatives - Carbon Cycle 1 and Carbon Cycle 2 - targeted potential entrepreneurs and assisted them in identifying, validating and employing socially innovative ideas.

Abeer said, "Our startup explores the future of development practices by introducing emerging concepts such as social innovation and circular economy. Our mission is to create and find social innovation opportunities and

introduce essential topics that will assist innovators in creating tangible and quantifiable impact to improve the status of the community by supporting development and transfer of practical solutions."

Additionally, Carbon 6 focuses on community involvement, organising speaking engagements and online campaigns such as the #Carbon_i_commit campaign that encouraged members of the community to commit to environmentally friendly practices.

(Contributed by Hibba al Kindi)



RECALL CAMPAIGN FOR LAND ROVER



Date of the campaign: 29/11/2022
Campaign type: Recall, Software Update & Safety Recall
Campaign section: Body & Electrical
Product description: Cars (Land Rover)

THE NUMBER OF AFFECTED VEHICLES	VIN NUMBERS	THE YEAR OF PRODUCTION	VEHICLE MODEL
172	SALCA2BGXGH581205 to SALCA2BX6MH884994 SALZA2BX1MH153433 to SALZA2BXXMH126859 SALKA9B70NA000613 to SALKA9BUXNA007994 SALEA6BU9M2054051 to SALEA7BU1N2107414 SALWA2BE9NA231162 to SAL1A2B76PA100690	2015 – 2022	Discovery Sport Evoque Range Rover Defender Range Rover Sport

Description of defect:
Airbag inflators (driver), Autoliv seatbelt retractor functionality, Car configuration file (ccf) update, Earc start up fail-Amber Lamp, EU2 EU5 P4M CO2 testing, Front lamp unit software update, Incorrect specification tail lamps, Software quality enhancement package, Unable to disengage all wheel drive (awd), Car configuration update (ccf).

Procedure:
JLR owners will be contacted. After Inspection if required the defected part(s) will be replaced for the concerning vehicles listed under campaign.

For more information:
Call us on 8006 2643 to book an appointment for the recall repair.

Contact data:
Call us on 8006 2643 for more information

MoF invites private sector to build Oman's first toll road

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In order to encourage private sector to invest in infrastructure projects, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) is inviting Expression of Interest from the private sector to build a road for trucks from Salalah to Thumrait under a public-private partnership (PPP) agreement.

The Salalah-Thumrait Truck Road (STTR) - the first of its kind in Oman - will be a 67km road, specifically for heavy vehicles and will be the sultanate's first road to implement toll system.

'In order to encourage the private sector to invest in infrastructure projects and public services, MoF, in coordination with the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technol-



ogy, seeks to engage the private sector in the design, construction, finance, operation and maintenance of STTR,' MoF said.

The last date for submission of bids is December 19.

In the Budget 2020 statement, MoF had stated that one of the key projects to be imple-

mented will be an additional expressway alongside the existing Salalah-Thumrait road. 'Trucks will be obliged to pay a service fee to use the expressway.'

In March this year, H E Said bin Hamoud al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information

Technology, had clarified that toll road system will not be implemented on existing roads used by regular passengers.

To a query by Majlis A'Shura, H E Ma'awali said, "Alternative roads for trucks will not cause any financial burden on citizens. The focus will be on trucks only."

Muscat Municipality invites bids for development of Nuzha dual carriageway

Our Correspondent
Muscat

To improve traffic movement, Muscat Municipality has announced a tender for the Nuzha dual carriageway project, which will include service roads, high-capacity traffic intersections, water drainage systems and road protection.

The 11km carriage-way with six signal intersections aims to enhance traffic efficiency along the Nuzha and Salam streets

Located in South Mabela in Seeb, the carriageway will run a length of 11km with six signal intersections and 3.5km of service roads.

'The project will include construction of 2.5km of concrete drainage channels, stormwater drainage system, multi-cell box culverts and LED street lighting,' the civic authority stated.

'The project aims to enhance traffic efficiency along the Nuzha and Salam streets, assisting in the growth of surrounding facilities, urban plans and neighbourhoods, and improving the drainage system.'

The construction for the project will begin in the second quarter of 2023 and last for 24 months.

Tender Announcement

Muscat Electricity Distribution Company S.A.O.C invites interested companies to participate in the following tenders

Tender No.	Description	Last Date of Buying	Date of Submission	DCRP Grade	Tender Price (R.O)
MEDC 098/2022	Disaster Recovery for DELL VxRail HCI Infrastructure	14/12/2022	27/12/2022	Specialist	52.500
MEDC 099/2022	Disaster Recovery for Huawei HCI Infrastructure	14/12/2022	27/12/2022	Specialist	52.500

The table below shows the instructions for participation: -

Participation	- Companies registered with Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion and in I Supplier with Nama Groupe may obtain Tender documents. - The amount specified above is including 5% VAT. - Riyada card holders from Small and Medium Enterprises, SME, are exempted from Tender fees - The amount specified above is Non-Refundable payment (Terms and Condition apply) - To obtain the tender document and payment procedure , please visit MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com or call 24588600 – Ext: 8577 – 8726
Enquiries	- Any inquiry can be sent to MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com , one week before bid submission date. - Any request for clarification received after the above-mentioned period will not be considered.
Tender Submission	Please follow SUBMISSION OF TENDER mentioned in clause 20.0 in Prime Document and to the supplier guideline available MEDC Website/Vendor/E-Tendering, www.medcoman.com
Guarantee	- The Tender should enclose a bank guarantee or a certified cheque issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman Unconditional and irrevocable and shall be disbursement as soon as it is submitted for the value of (1%) of the tender value valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission and addressed to the CHAIRMAN OF MINOR TENDER COMMITTEE, MUSCAT ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY S.A.O.C. - The bid bond should be included in the commercial proposal only as sof copy. - Riyada card holders from Small and Medium Enterprises, SME, are exempted from bid bond requirements. - After the commercial opening , the qualified bidders will be notified to submit the original (hard copy) of bid bond to MEDC office. - Any tender not accompanied by a Tender Bond shall be rejected.
Terms and Conditions	- The Tender shall be valid for a period of at least ninety (90) days from the last date of tender submission including any extension thereof. - If the submission date extended, the bank guarantee or a certified cheque shall be extended in accordance with the bid extension date. - MEDC is not bound to accept the lowest (or highest) Tenderer. - 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 - Muscat Electricity Distribution Company gives priority to award the projects to SMEs companies. - For projects whose value is less than OMR 10K, the priority to award will be given to registered companies that hold a valid certificate Of Reyadah. - Failure to comply with the instructions in tender document may lead to disqualification.

‘Muscat Eat’ food festival from December 1

Muscat - The new edition of ‘Muscat Eat’ food festival will be held in two sessions - from December 1 to 3 and from December 8 to 10 - at Madinat al Irfan.

In a statement, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism said, ‘The festival will include a host of entertainment activities, events and theatrical performances next to

Omantel building in Madinat al Irfan’. The festival will involve the participation of SMEs, which will present various local and international cuisines, it added.

INVITATION TO TENDER



Sohar Aluminium LLC (SA), PO Box 80, PC- 327, Sohar, Sultanate of Oman hereby invites qualified Suppliers/Contractors for the following tender:

Tender No.	: 22-022
Tender Title	: Cisco Support Services
Scope	: Sohar Aluminium intends to have support under Cisco Enterprise which will cover SA Critical core devices support (Hardware + Software + Tech Support) services as specified in technical Specifications.
Tender No.	: 22-023
Tender Title	: Refurbishment of Process Water Tanks
Scope	: Refurbishment, survey, inspect & repair Water Tanks services as specified in technical Specifications.
Tender No.	: 22-024
Tender Title	: Re-painting of Piping
Scope	: Inspect and paint the Compressed air and Natural gas networks services as specified in technical Specifications.
Tender No.	: 2022-ENG-SOW-0032
Tender Title	: Stem Assembly Scanning system
Scope	: The performance of the Reduction department depends on the performance of the anode assembly (AA). To meet the specifications, the stem assembly is checked once before casting by a contractor (station 1). Defective stem do pass unnoticed leading to wasted AA.
Document Issue Date	: 8 December 2022
Last Date For Applying	: 6 December 2022
Kindly send your email and company profile to: tender@sohar-aluminium.com For list of active tenders visit: https://www.sohar-aluminium.com/en/content/tender-listing	

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Companies specialized in the field and registered with **Tender Board**, may obtain tender documents for the website through the following link:
(<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) against non-refundable fees as mentioned below starting from the date of this announcement and until the end of deadline stipulated abelow.

Tender No.	No E-Tender	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last date to collect the tender	Tender return date	Grade
PRE/21/029	2021/MM/HQ-27 (Re-Call-02)	Supply and Laying of Asphalt for Muscat Governorate (Re-Tender 2)(E- Tender)	Rail 50	08/12/2022	18/12/2022	Excellent
PRE/22/125	2022/MM/QS-82	Construction of Proposed Solutions to Resolve Water Stagnation at Al Amerat Phase7 (E- Tender)	Rail 25	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	First
PRE/22/158	2022/MM/QS-83	Manufacture and Supply of Safety Barrier 2023 (E- Tender)	Rail 25	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	Specialist
PRE/22/161	022/MM/HQ-19	Supply of Road Marking Materials for Road Maintenance 2023 2024 (E- Tender)	Rail 25	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	Specialist
PRE/22/027	2022/MM/QS-66 (Re-Call-01)	Graveyard Refurbishment Works at Muscat (Re-Tender)(E- Tender)	Rail 25	08/12/2022	15/12/2022	Second
PRE/22/118	2022/MM/QS-61 (Re-Call-01)	Design and Construction of Pedestrian Bridge and Embankment Protection Works in Airport Heights (Re-Tender)(E- Tender)	Rail 25	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	First
PRE/22/121	2022/MM/HQ-14 (Re-Call-01)	Design & Construction of Storm Water Drainage in Wilayat Boshier (Re-Tender)(E- Tender)	Rail 47	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	Excellent
PRE/22/124	2022/MM/QS-63 (Re-Call-01)	Treatment of Water Stagnation for Masar Project at Al Amerat (Re-Tender)(E- Tender)	Rail 25	20/12/2022	08/01/2023	Second
PRE/22/138	2022/MM/QS-72 (Re-Call-01)	AMC for Muscat Municipality Applications (Re-Tender)(E- Tender)	Rail 25	08/12/2022	15/12/2022	Specialist

Tender Conditions :-

- Bidders shall submit their offers electronically accompanied with an electronic copy of abond issued by any local bank in Oman addressed to Muscat municipality. The bond shall be (1%) of the tender value valid for ninety (90) days starting from the date of bids submission. Any tenders which do not meet the required bond shall not be accepted.
 - Tender Bonds shall be E-Bond and to be submitted through E-Tendering system, addressed to Muscat Municipality.
 - For any inquiries regarding tenders, please visit e-tendering website: (<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) .
 - For technical support of e-tendering system please send an email to (etenderhd@mtcit.gov.om) or call (+96824402200).
 - For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to (esnad@gstb.gov.om) or call (+96824402200/24402330).

Oman fans pin hope on Arab teams

Shaddad al Musalmy
Muscat

Fans in Oman have pinned high hopes on an Arab team qualifying for FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Round of 16. With Saudi Arabia and Morocco upsetting tournament favourites Argentina and second-ranked Belgium respectively, citizens and residents are hopeful of these teams making a mark.

With the World Cup being held in the Arab world for the first time, the prospect of one Arab team - Saudi Arabia, Tunisia or Morocco - advancing into the Round of 16 is very exciting for fans in Oman.

Qatar's 2-0 defeat at the hands of Ecuador in the tournament opener and losing to Senegal 1-3 may have disappointed fans, but good performances by Saudi Arabia and Morocco have shown that anything is possible.

Saudi Arabia has been in the spotlight since its stunning 2-1



comeback win over Argentina, and plenty has been said about the game but when the football world was talking about Saudi Arabia's Salem al Dawsari rather than Lionel Messi, that was new.

But the team rankings in the tournament became complicated for the Saudi team after losing to Poland 2-0.

Fadhel al Mazrui, Omani sports analyst, who is in Qatar to

support the Arab teams, said, "I am in Doha as a fan and to support the Arab teams. We have high hopes of the Saudi and Moroccan teams storming into the Round of 16."

He added, "Saudi Arabia has good players, a good coach and are prepared both physically and mentally. For the region as a whole however, this tournament is already looking very different.

For the region, this tournament is already looking very different. The Saudis have shown the way and are leading a resurgent Arab football world

FADHEL AL MAZRUI

The Saudis have shown the way and are leading a resurgent Arab football world."

Mazrui said Morocco has done well this World Cup. It won its first World Cup match since 1998 - and its third ever - securing a sensational 2-0 victory over heavyweights Belgium to ensure that it can qualify for the knock-out stage for the second time in its history.

A Moroccan fan said the team is placed in a strong group. "Our team is great but the group we

are in is so strong. We have to fight it out. There is still a chance," said Abdul Samad, a Moroccan teacher.

While Qatar has already exited the tournament, Tunisia still has a chance. "It is so sad to see Qatar failing to make it to the next round," said Salim Hameed, an Omani youth who has been in Qatar since the beginning of the tournament. "It is a good team and I am disappointed they did not make it. I would have loved to see it advance to the next stage because it is the first time the World Cup is being played in the region with Qatar as host. However, I would like to commend Qatar for being a great host."

Siham Abdul Hakim, a Tunisian working in Oman, said, "Our team played well but its opponents were stronger. It will be sad to exit the World Cup so early but this is because of lack of strong strikers. Also, our defence is not so good. I am sad but hope my team plays well in the future."

TENDER NOTICE

The Internal Tender Committee of Port of Duqm Company SAOC., hereby announces the following Tender:

Tender No.	Description	Last Date of receiving Specifications	Date of Bid Submission	Suppliers	Tender Fee OMR (Inclusive of VAT 5%)	Place of Submission
ITC/T/014/2022	Design, Supply and installation of 02 Nos leading lights and day markers as per IALA guidelines.	13th December 2022	29th December 2022	Only Specialized Local & International Companies	None /-	Port of Duqm Company 3rd floor

Taking into consideration the following:

All specialized companies that wish to participate in the tender may retrieve the Tender Document by sending a written request to tenders@portofduqm.om with the mention "Tender# ITC/T/014/2022 Design, Supply and installation of 02 Nos leading lights and day markers as per IALA guidelines" in reference. Along with request bidders should enclose copy of the Commercial Registration Certificate and the contact details of the authorized individual (business card).

Complete Tender documents should be submitted in sealed envelope with red wax with tender number and title and addressed to the "Chairman of Internal Tender Committee". The envelope should not make any reference to the bidder details.

All applicants are required to submit the Tender in the Tender box in the main office of Port of Duqm Company at or before 16:00 PM on the assigned date for submission of the Tender. Tenders submitted after the above mentioned date and time shall not be considered.

- The company is not obliged to accept the lowest offer or any other offer without any justifiable reasons.
- The company reserve the right to issue the order either in part or full for the quoted items without any justifiable reasons.
- The company reserve the right to reject the tenders not complying with the tender documentation requirement. For any clarification, please contact us through tenders@portofduqm.om

Port of Duqm Company S.A.O.C.

PO Box: 2409, P.C: 111, Sultanate of Oman,
Almashreq Building, 18 November Street, N. Azaiba
T: (+968) 24342800 | F: (+968) 24587343 | www.portofduqm.om

Submission deadline set for Bilarab award

Muscat - Organisers of the Bilarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design have set December 1 as the deadline for submission of entries.

The second edition of the award is dedicated to designing the 14,154sqm Maritime History Museum in Sur, South Sharqiyah.

After receiving the entries, the arbitration committee will select the 30 best submissions and no-

tify the participants with comments, if any, to improve their projects. In the final stage, the ten best projects will be short-listed for the top prize of the second edition of the award.

The competition is open to Omanis younger than 35 years, who specialise in architectural design and urban planning. Contestants can participate as individuals or three-member groups. ONA

Workshop delves on conservation of Arabian Sea humpback whales

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ship strikes, by-catch and entanglement in fishing nets are some of the many factors threatening Arabian Sea humpback whales in Omani waters.

The Arabian Sea humpback whale was classified as endangered on the IUCN Red List of threatened species in 2008. It is estimated to be one of the smallest and potentially most vulnerable whale populations in the world, numbering fewer than 100 individuals (best estimate 82).

The Arabian Sea humpback whale is one of 20 species of marine mammals found in Oman's waters and is one of four species of great whales found in the sultanate - besides the Northern Indian Ocean blue whale, Bryde's whale and sperm whale.

A workshop to discuss protection of the humpback whale was held in a collaboration between the Environment Authority (EA) and the Environment Society of Oman (ESO), on Monday.

The event brought together local and international experts and policy makers to encourage collective responsibility and further measures that could lead to a safer habitat for the regionally endangered species.

The two-day workshop involved presentations by representatives from international experts, including the International Whaling Commission, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Cetacean Specialist Group, as well as local entities who recognise the importance of protecting Arabian Sea hump-



H H Sayyida Tania

back whales, including EA and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The workshop also included discussions on how to design and implement Conservation Management Plans (CMP) to minimise the threat to these whales.

H H Sayyida Tania al Said, President of ESO, said, "We have been around for 18 years but work on whales started even before that. We are now in a stage where we know the science and the status and thus we can now devise methods to tackle these problems. Some of the major threats are noise pollution due to development across the coastline, shipping accidents and ghost fishing. Sustainable conservation measures incorporating a cross-cutting approach are required to mitigate the threats to the survival of this unique species."

She informed that the workshop discussed how various government and industry stakeholders can work together to develop local CMP considering lessons learnt from a global perspective, as well as ways in which Oman can collaborate with other countries within the Arabian Sea humpback range to promote regional conservation measures.

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Sustainable City Yiti outlines its commitment to Oman

Muscat - The Sustainable City-Yiti (TSCY) has reaffirmed its commitment to Oman and its economy.

The Sustainable City-Yiti is being developed by Sustainable Development Investment Company (SDIC), a partnership between Diamond Developers and Oman Tourism Development Company (Oman Group).

The billion-dollar development aims to support the goals of the Oman Vision 2040, as well as the National Tourism Strategy, by creating a live-work-thrive city, that is green, energy efficient, and people-centric.

It is also playing an integral role in contributing to in-country value for the sultanate, with 78.65 per cent of Omani-sourced goods and materials being sourced in the past six months alone. More than 58 SMEs in Oman have also benefited from the works undertaken at TSCY in the last two quarters.

Scheduled to complete in



Scheduled to complete in 2025, TSCY development has supported more than 1,800 jobs during construction, both direct and indirect, generating over 961,000-man hours to date

2025, the development has supported more than 1,800 jobs during construction, both direct and indirect, generating over 961,000-man hours to date.

Eng Ammar Sulaiman al Kharusi, head of development at Oman Group said, "We are delighted to play our part in strengthening the economy of

Oman, from the tourism sector to SMEs and the huge number of employment opportunities through this exciting project. Ours is a truly sustainable development in every sense of the word and by driving in-country value across the board, we are further contributing to the growth and prosperity of the sultanate."

TSCY will consist of 300 villas, 1,225 apartments and 132 luxury serviced apartments. The community also includes indoor

and vertical farms, a central plaza with a mall, a school, a nursery, two hotels, a sports complex, medical clinics, an autism center, and an institute.

Home to 10,000 residents and visitors once complete, The Sustainable City - Yiti will be the largest operational sustainable community in the world, with ambitions to be the first Net Zero Carbon community in Oman by 2040. The city is designed to deliver measurable outcomes across all three pillars of sustainability: social, environmental, and economic, bringing forward the UN emission reduction targets for 2050.

The city follows the blueprint for low-carbon living that was pioneered by the first 'The Sustainable City', which opened in Dubai in 2016. The model ensures a reduction in carbon footprint, from design to operation, using disruptive innovation to achieve transformational societal change.

CBO signs MoU with AAOIFI

Our Correspondent
Muscat



The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) on Sunday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI), with a focus on several areas, including standards development, capacity building, and knowledge exchange.

The MoU signing ceremony took place on the sidelines of the AAOIFI and Islamic Development Bank's 17th Annual Islamic Banking Conference in Manama, Bahrain.

The signing of this MOU also coincided with Oman completing a decade since the official introduction of Islamic finance industry in the country, according to a press statement issued by the CBO.

During this decade, Islamic finance in Oman managed to take 16 per cent of the market share, making its growth one of the fastest in the world. With assets totaling over RO6.1bn. The Omani Islamic banking market is

today the 15th largest internationally.

AAOIFI is an Islamic international autonomous non-for-profit corporate body, established in 1991 and based in Bahrain, that prepares accounting, auditing, governance, ethics, and Shariah standards for Islamic financial institutions and the industry.

AAOIFI aims to standardise and harmonize international Islamic finance practices and financial reporting in accordance to Islamic Shariah. In this regard, it complements the work of the Islamic Financial Services Board (IFSB), which has a broader mandate and is more focused on prudential regulation standards for the industry.

Asyad Shipping wins Shipping Manager of the Year Award

Muscat - Asyad Shipping, the shipping arm of Asyad Group, won the Ship Manager of the Year Award for 2022 at the ninth edition of The Maritime Standard Awards in Dubai, UAE.

The Maritime Standard Awards is an annually held regional event that recognises excellence in the shipping, ports and maritime industries in the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent. More than 800 top executives, from the GCC, Asia and Europe gather to witness the prestigious awards presented to leading entities

across the industry.

Commenting on this achievement, Dr Ibrahim al Nadhairi, CEO of Asyad Shipping and Asyad Drydock, said, "This recognition is the culmination of outstanding efforts made by Asyad Group to advance our competencies in maritime transport and ensure highly competitive services in the Middle East, Africa and the Indian Subcontinent. Being named Ship Manager of the Year speaks volumes of our proficiency, experience and regional leadership in managing ships and carriers of different

sizes and purposes."

Nadhairi added that this year's award was a show of consistency as Asyad Group picked up the 2021 Bulk Shipping Company of The Year award in recognition of its outstanding performance.

"These accomplishments were driven by Asyad Group's efforts to provide integrated and flexible logistics solutions that suit customers who aspire to enter the MENA markets or reach regional and global markets using Oman's many advantages as a leading global logistics hub," he said.

Saudi plans massive new airport in Riyadh

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia - Saudi Arabia on Monday announced plans for a new airport in Riyadh intended to spur rapid growth in the capital while advancing the kingdom's ambitious aviation goals.

The airport, set to accommodate 120mn travellers by 2030 and 185mn travellers by 2050, will be named after 86-year-old King Salman and was announced by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

"The airport project is in line with Saudi Arabia's vision to transform Riyadh to be among the top ten city economies in the



Mohammed bin Salman

world and to support the growth of Riyadh's population to 15-20mn people by 2030," SPA

said.

The city's current population is fewer than eight million.

Saudi Arabia's aviation goals, part of Prince Mohammed's wide-ranging "Vision 2030" reforms, include more than tripling annual traffic to 330mn passengers by the end of the decade.

It also wants to draw US\$100bn in investments to the sector by 2030, establish a new national flag carrier and move up to five million tonnes of cargo each year.

The new airport is expected to be able to process 3.5mn tonnes of cargo by 2050, SPA said.

It "will boost Riyadh's position

as a global logistics hub, stimulate transport, trade and tourism, and act as a bridge linking the East with the West," SPA said.

The announcement did not provide information about the cost of the project, which has been designed to cover 57 square kilometres.

"With sustainability at its core, the new airport will achieve LEED Platinum certification by incorporating cutting edge green initiatives into its design and will be powered by renewable energy," SPA said, referring to the green building certification programme.

AFP

Inflation risks, ESG to impact GCC banks' corporate business: Report

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The GCC banks' corporate and investment banking (CIB) business will be critically exposed to the global inflationary pressure and heavily impacted by environmental, social and governance (ESG) efforts, a new report said on Tuesday.

Corporate banking assets in the GCC region represent more than three times those of retail banking, according to global management consulting firm Arthur D. Little.

GCC banks, however, focus their external communication primarily on the consumer segment, whether it is Fintech, strategy, digital transformation, products, or applications. Corporate banking is often perceived as a specialist area and, as a result, innovation is frequently thought to be focused in the retail banking sector, Arthur D. Little said in its new Viewpoint "Pursuing Excellence in Corporate Banking".

The report reviews the impacts of recent and expected disruptions and explores options for GCC banks to strengthen and grow their CIB business. It highlighted that there are a few important reasons for banks' primary focus to return to corporate banking, namely inflationary pressure, ESG efforts and poten-



Philippe DeBacker

tial growth drivers for CIB businesses.

"An inflationary storm is ahead, and CIB will be critically exposed to it. Capital and debt are now rare resources and banks need to monitor their adequacy ratios and optimise allocation based on diversification, return, and risk targets. Banks must also anticipate potential balance sheet clean up and impact on tier-1 capital, and also consider developing treasury and liquidity management capabilities in parallel," the report said.

The Arthur D. Little report noted that CIB is heavily impacted by ESG efforts. It said ESG represents a new dimension by which investors judge banks, so banks must allocate resources to ESG to improve their performance versus the competition.

Highlighting opportunity for

CIB, the report said that the GCC banks' corporate and investment banking business offers a significant upside potential.

"While the retail segment is closer to reaching saturation, CIB benefits from several growth drivers. Clients are facing increasingly complex issues that require new solutions from banks. In addition, the SME segment remains underpenetrated. The potential of digital optimisation remains mostly untapped as well, and sizeable innovation opportunities exist in the space of blockchain and cryptocurrencies," the report said.

The Arthur D. Little report also outlined an increasingly competitive, fast-evolving, and complex environment for GCC banks' CIB business, which includes a variety of challenges caused by structural trends, COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine.

"Structural trends include a continuous decrease of margins followed by rebounding inflationary rates. There is also increasing competition for larger clients, calling for segment and product diversification," the report said.

The COVID-19 pandemic, as per the report, has also created many challenges for banks, including volumes growth that is hampered by demand contraction. It said the war in Ukraine has added to volatility in stocks,

commodities, and currencies, implying additional trading volumes and hedging needs.

Philippe DeBacker, managing partner and global head of financial services, Arthur D. Little, said, "The GCC region offers a positive and transformational environment for corporate and investment banking amid high hopes for the economy and enormous private and public sector spending. Banks should anticipate further sector consolidation due to shrinking margins and high regulatory requirements."

"To accelerate their journey to becoming banks of the future, GCC banks need to redesign their business models to maximise revenue per customer, protect capital and ensure risk resilience by optimising the use of financial technology," he added.

The Arthur D. Little report noted that customers are expecting full support from banks despite dire circumstances. It said GCC banks have the opportunity to engage businesses beyond credit, such as with distressed M&As, debt capital market, or ESG transformation financing.

The report further said that the banks should simplify business by reducing the complexity of the organisation as well as the products and activities they carry out.



Muscat Finance (S.A.O.G)

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NOTICE AND INVETATION TO ATTEND THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of MUSCAT FINANCE (the "Company") has the pleasure to invite the shareholders to attend the Ordinary General Meeting General Meeting, which will be held on **Thursday at 03:00 PM on 15/12/2022**, via the electronic platform to hold Ordinary General Meeting general meetings which can be assessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om) and will be held in this location (Park Inn Hotel) . If the quorum requirement for holding the Annual General Meeting is not fulfilled, a second Ordinary General Meeting General Meeting shall be held on **Saturday at 03:00 PM on 17/12/2022**, via the electronic platform which can be assessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.gov.om) and will be held in this location (Park Inn Hotel) to discuss the following agenda:

Ordinary General Meeting Agendas :

- To consider and approve the utilization of the Legal Reserve to extinguish the accumulated losses shown in company's financial statement ended 31/12/2021

According to the Company's Articles of Association and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology issued by the capital market authority , we would like to draw your attention to the following:

- Legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the General Meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCD.
- Voting on any of the agenda items begins no more than three days before the date of the General Meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the General Meeting. If the shareholder's shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the General Meeting.

For further information please contact on telephone No 92739184 or email: linna@mfcoman.com

Chairman
Consultanta

Legal Advisor
Albusaidy , Mansoor
Jamal Barristers & Legal

External Auditor
Ernst & Young

Beaconhouse achieves top results in IGCSE

Four students from Beaconhouse, Oman have received prestigious awards from Cambridge Assessment International Education for their outstanding performance in the Cambridge examination series in November. The Outstanding Cambridge Learner Awards programme celebrates the success of students taking Cambridge examinations in over 40 countries around the world. Those who won High Achievement Awards are Muhammad Huzaifa Shahid in Islamiyat (IGCSE), Muneeza Hashmi in Urdu (IGCSE), Muhammad Usman in Computer Science (AS Level) and Muhaddisa Zehra in Accounting and Information Technology (A Level).

Genesis G90 named ‘Car of the Year’

MotorTrend named the 2023 Genesis G90 as its 2023 Car of the Year during the Genesis press conference at the Los Angeles International Auto Show on November 17. This marks the third time Genesis has received top honors from MotorTrend, following GV70 as 2022 SUV of the Year and G70 as 2019 Car of the Year. “We are humbled to have our flagship G90 sedan named as 2023 MotorTrend Car of the Year,” said Claudia Marquez, chief operating officer of Genesis Motor North America. “Genesis is pleased to receive this recognition, further demonstrating the focus we place on delivering products with a level of design, performance, and refinement that customers have come to expect.” G90 competed against twenty contenders.

ISG International tops in Cambridge results

Two learners from Indian School Al Ghubra International have received prestigious awards from Cambridge Assessment International Education to acknowledge their outstanding performance in the June 2022 Cambridge examination series. ISG students who achieved the awards are Chitrangada Siddharth Chaturvedi (Top in Oman in Business Studies and Economics) and Mankodi Anushka Unnit (High Achievement Award in Business). “It is extremely rewarding to congratulate Cambridge learners and teachers at ISG,” said vice principal Pyarija Cidar.

Italian Embassy begins cuisine week

Italian Embassy in Muscat has started celebrating the Italian Cuisine Week in the World from Saturday. The 7th edition of the cuisine week, which will run until December 4, is back under the theme ‘Conviviality, Sustainability and Innovation: The Ingredients of Italian Cuisine for the Health of Individuals and the Protection of the Planet’, said the embassy. “The Italian Cuisine Week in the World was created not only to promote our Italian cuisine and culture, but to also to highlight the importance of having a healthy lifestyle through rich ingredients. The initiative this year highlights sustainability by choosing to lead the healthy lifestyle that is found in the Mediterranean Diet,” said Italian Ambassador H E Federica Favi.

IS Salalah begins 40hr Relay Reading

Indian School Salalah has begun a 40-hour long ‘Relay Reading’ on Monday at 7am with students, teachers, alumni and parents gathering in large numbers to participate in this historic moment. This event which is being live streamed on YouTube is said to be an exciting landmark in the history of Indian School Salalah. To commemorate the four decades of incredible accomplishment, school management committee president Dr Syed Ahsan Jamil, Principal Deepak Patankar, other members of the committee and the staff have meticulously planned a yearlong series of exciting events and activities under the guidance of chairman Dr Sivakumar Manickam and DIC Sirajudeen Nehelat. The ‘Relay Reading’ will end at 11pm on Tuesday.

Microsoft, MTCIT launch ‘Build the Skills of the Future’ training

Microsoft and the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology (MTCIT) launched ‘Build the Skills of the Future’ training programme focusing on cloud, data and Artificial Intelligence (AI). This initiative comes as part of the MoU signed between both parties in May this year and in-line with the Digital Competency Qualification Initiative (Makeen) to empower Omani youth with advanced digital skills needed to succeed in the digital era as well as provide them with income-generating opportunities in the digital sector. The initiative aims to train 10,000 Omani digital skills by 2025. Through the ‘Build the Skills of the Future’ programme, Microsoft will equip students, academia, SMEs, start-ups and government employees with the necessary skills to succeed in the ever-evolving technology and innovation world. The training also aligns with the government’s digital transformation programme, set to run until 2025. This complements one of the National



Digital Economy Programme initiatives - a key facilitator toward accomplishing Oman Vision 2040 for sustainability and economic diversification. The ‘Build the Skills of the Future’ training programme kicked off on November 6 and will continue until December 7 at the Middle East College in Knowledge Oasis Muscat, Rusayl, of-

fering five Microsoft Azure certification tracks. Participants can choose from a range of skill levels and course topics that will enlighten them on the fundamentals of cloud, Data and AI, as well as designing and implementing a complete Data and AI solution. “The significance of combining academic qualifications with digital capabilities and professional certifications has become imperative for current employees, entrepreneurs, and those aspiring to join the workforce,” said Sheikh Saif Hilal al Hosni, General Manager for Microsoft in Oman and Bahrain. “We at Microsoft remain committed to encouraging lifelong learning, skilling and upskilling the workforce to fill professional gaps. With Microsoft’s unrivalled expertise, this training initiative with MTCIT will ensure government employees, students, as well as other professionals, are equipped with valued skills to accelerate the country’s digital transformation programme,” he added.

MoE conducts training in specialised applications in art

The Ministry of Education (MoE), represented by the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision-Department of Supervision of Individual Skills, implemented a two-day training programme in ‘Specialised Applications in Art’ for 25 supervisors chosen from the educational directorates in various governorates, a release said. The training programme kicked-off on Sunday morning at the Specialised Institute for Vocational Training for Teachers, it added. This training programme comes with an aim of raising the level of efficiency of the first supervisors and art supervisors with the latest experiences and applied skills in the field of specialisation, and developing their specialised skills that enable them to carry out their supervisory role, in addition to exchanging successful experiences applied in the educational field. The programme includes the presentation of two training worksheets that combine the theoretical and applied aspects. On the first day, Khamis bin Darwish al Balushi, senior supervisor of art in South Batinah governorate, presented a paper entitled ‘Art and Creative Exhibitions’ with the aim of developing the knowledge and skills of these supervisors in creative planning to hold school art exhibitions, by providing an introductory overview of the various art exhibitions, their foundations, identifying the types of educational art exhibitions, the stages of organising creative art exhibitions, the challenges they face in setting them up and the appropriate solutions, in addition to providing the opportunity to exchange experiences and various artistic skills in the implementation of various art exhibitions. On the second day, Khalsa bint Talib al Saadi, supervisor of art in South Batinah governorate, presented a paper entitled ‘The Art of Ebro and its Alternatives’ - introducing participants to the art of (Ebro), providing a brief history of it and its uses, the most famous artists who excelled in it, its features, forms, how it is implemented and applied.



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Your mouth and heart - are they linked?

You might think the mouth and heart don’t have much in common, but evidence suggests their close link. Researchers observed bacteria present in gum and tooth diseases travel throughout the body, triggering inflammation in the heart valve which in turn can result in heart attacks, strokes and sudden vascular events. In people with heart disease affecting the blood vessels, this can add to the process. The risk is even greater when high cholesterol is added to the mix. Oral bacteria have been uncovered in the fatty deposits in people with atherosclerosis, a disease in which plaque builds up in the arteries which can narrow arteries or break loose and clog them, causing a heart attack and stroke when left untreated. People with heart valve disease and artificial heart valves are particularly at risk when gum disease is present. The bacteria can cross into your bloodstream, enter the heart and directly infect the vulnerable heart valve. Recent studies also point out that untreated tooth infection could increase the risk of heart disease by three times. Tooth infections are caused by tooth decay as a result of poor oral hygiene routines and diet high in sugar. Infection occurs when decay reaches the centre of the tooth - the Dental Pulp. When the tooth dies, a reservoir of bacteria spreads beyond the end of the root and enters the bloodstream. Apart from heart, there are also evidences suggesting an association between oral and systemic diseases. Specifically periodontal disease has been associated with diabetes, metabolic syndrome, obesity, eating disorders, liver disease, Alzheimer’s disease,



Dr Indu Sasidharan, Specialist in Dentistry, Aster Al Raffah Hospital, Sohar rheumatoid arthritis, adverse pregnancy outcomes and even cancer. Although bi-directional relationships are recognised, the potential for multiple comorbidities and connections also exist. Oral diseases are among the most widespread diseases in the Arab nations and have major health and economic burdens which even effects the quality of life. Practicing a good oral hygiene routine, combined with regular and constant visits to the dentist are essential for maintaining good oral health and eliminating dental diseases and infections.

- Some helpful tips on oral hygiene:**
- Flossing is the foundation for healthy gums, so floss ur teeth once a day. Floss would get into area between your teeth and under your gums that your toothbrush cannot
 - Brush your teeth twice a day and make sure to do so after you floss which is a more effective method of cleaning your teeth
 - Eat a well balanced diet, avoid excessive snacking between meals, especially sticky and sugary foods
 - Use either an antiseptic or fluoride rinse as directed by your dentist
 - Avoid smoking

Oman Air unveils ‘Super Saver’ for who travel light

Continuing to meet the evolving needs of its passengers, Oman Air has introduced Super Saver, a brand-new category of economy class fare that offers greater choice and more value than ever. Designed for those who travel light, the low-cost option allows passengers to opt for no check-in bag-

gage while enjoying savings of up to 20 per cent on tickets and 7kg of carry-on baggage allowance. Available exclusively on the airline’s website and mobile app, Oman Air’s ‘Super Saver’ fares are competitively priced, making them the perfect option for budget-conscious travellers or for those who are taking short trips

and don’t require much baggage. “Oman Air recognises that every passenger has varying travel needs, which is why we have created a suite of new airfares,” said Umesh Chhiber, senior vice president - Revenue, Retail & Cargo. “Each fare type offers customers specific benefits,” he added.

High performance Audi Q7 impressive performer on or off-road

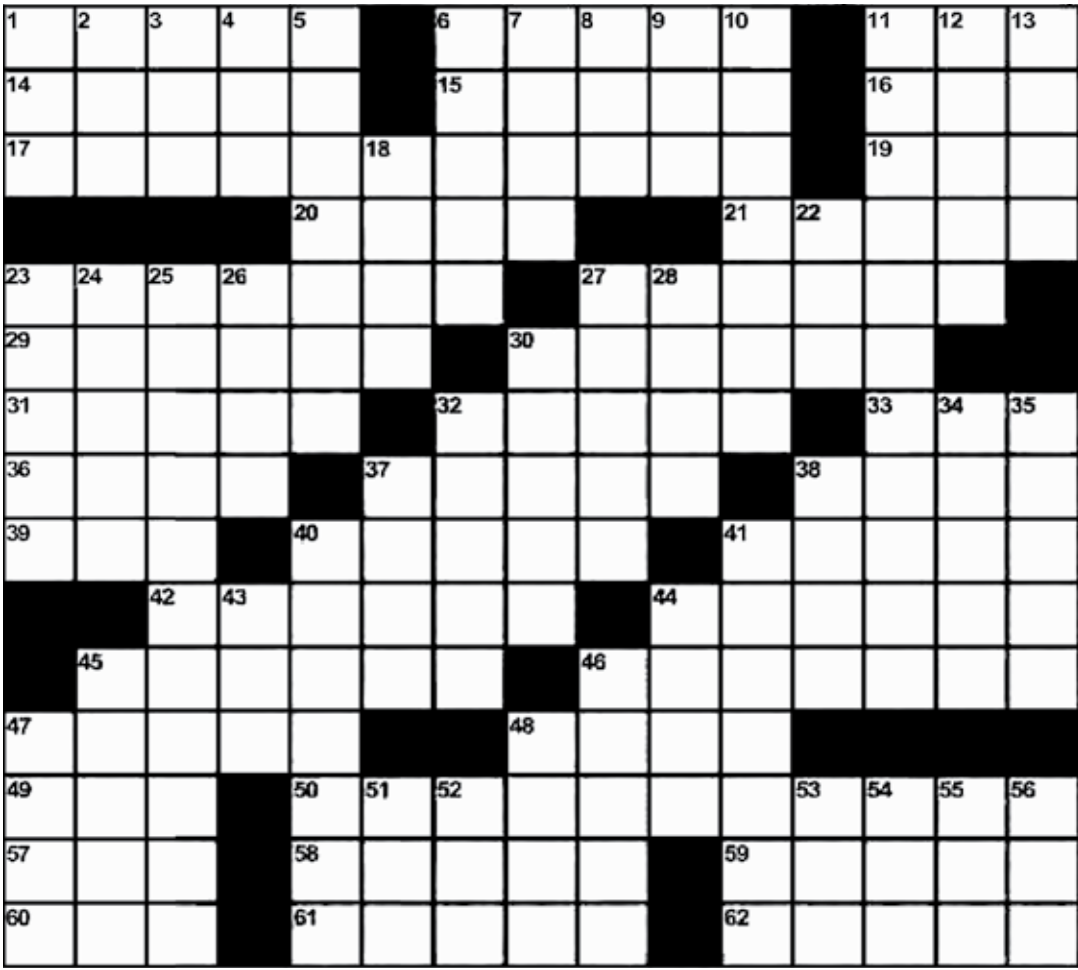
Often the most cherished memories are made when you live life to the fullest each day or when you take the path less traveled. Whether you are dropping off the kids to a mall or exploring the Jebel Akhdar’s mountain range with friends, the Audi Q7’s great performance, spacious interiors and powerful engines give you the freedom of being you. The tremendous capability of this model not only allows you to experience secluded sights otherwise inaccessible, but also live on the road in luxury. If you are looking for a high performing SUV that is a winner on the tarmac, but also possesses the ability to carry you off the beaten path, then the Audi Q7 is a vehicle you must consider. Better than the best, the Audi Q7



features capable powertrain options, innovative off-road capabilities, and advanced tech features to help you outperform even when the asphalt turns to gravel. With a striking look that is captured the hearts of countless drivers all over the world, Audi Q7 balances off-road and on-road capability with bespoke luxury like no other vehicle. Entirely modern, and ready for all challenges, the V6 gasoline engine in the Q7 is charged by a monoturbo. It boasts of 250 kW, 500 Nm of torque, from 0 to 100km per hour in less than six seconds, 250km per hour top speed. The Audi Q7 is coupled with an eight-speed tiptronic and the quattro permanent all-wheel drive. The standard mild hybrid technology plays a key part in the efficiency of the engines. In customer operation, this technology can reduce consumption by up to 0.7 litres per 100km. If the driver takes their foot off the accelerator at speeds between 55km and 160km per hour, the Audi Q7 recuperates energy, rolls in idle or coasts for up to 40 seconds with the engine switched off. An intricately appointed interior featuring great materials and thorough attention to detail helps owners take in their surroundings in complete comfort. Whether with five or seven seats

– the Audi Q7 blends prestige with practical everyday qualities. The Audi Q7 outshines its direct competitors with interior length as well as headroom and elbow room in the front and rear. A host of storage compartments, a new compartment in the instrument panel as well as the generous load capacity provides superior practical utility value. The Audi Q7 demonstrates the hallmark SUV elements in the current design language. It bears the large octagon-shaped Singleframe, with six upright slats providing the structure. As such, the SUV looks even more powerful. The two-part side air inlets have a much more expressive line, just like the sill area that underscores the large SUV’s ground clearance and, in turn, its off-road capabilities.

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Lint collector, of sorts
6) Ararat's successor
11) Roll-call dissent
14) Greek marketplace of old
15) Cash, casually
16) Fertility clinic stock
17) At times
19) "I'm impressed!"
20) Intimate and comfortable
21) Oxford doctorate, briefly
23) Get together
27) Completely obliterated
29) Depth charge targets
30) Mexico's national flower
31) Cries like a baby
32) Fundamental social standards
33) Genetic "messenger"
36) Part of an archipelago
37) "Animal House" house
38) "That's enough!"
39) Classic introduction?
40) One way to cook eggs
41) Sap-sucker's genus
42) Surfing the Web

- 44) Whack aftermath
45) Knitter's purchases
46) Slow-moving vehicles
47) Neutral middle vowel
48) Heating chunk
49) "We_ Family"
50) Start of a magician's phrase
57) Long-jawed fish
58) Malfunction, as a computer
59) Bird on the back of a buck
60) Jungle swinger
61) Meddlesome gossip
62) Lagoon's surroundings
- DOWN**
1) A Bobbey twin
2) Reminiscence word
3) "I do," for example
4) Period in history
5) Surgical knives
6) Blow away
7) Unidentified aircraft (Var.)
8) Constricting snake
9) Rhyming boxing champ
10) Mercury's had wings
11) Captain's "Listen up!"

- 12) Keep one's distance from
13) Sailing vessel
18) Family heads?
22) Air pump letters
23) Chili-powder herb
24) Heavy, plus
25) "Wait just a second!"
26) Long land depression
27) Where to find every-one
28) Emmy winner Perlman
30) "La_Vita"
32) Affluence
34) Clamor
35) Altar locations
37) Rub out, mob-style
38) San Antonio cager
40) Malleability
4 J) Large Asian border lake
43) Fresh
44) Potential Mr. Right
45) Deep-six
46) Ado
4 7) Adventurous story
48) Dermatologist's concern
51) Lode load
52) Not at all ruddy

- 53) Make a meal of
54) Diva's problem

- 55) _ at ease
56) Bus. card abbr.

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

You're optimistic, eager, and anxious to take a chance. At least one. So now, when the Universe taps you on the shoulder and asks that you leap before you look simply because it feels right, you'll be more than happy to accept the challenge and more than confident enough to pull it off. You've paid your dues for some time now. How about letting the warrior side of your personality have some long overdue fun?



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You're due to run into someone new, exciting, and interesting at any moment, and under odd or unusual circumstances. You'll recognize them by the mischievous grin they're wearing, the one that perfectly matches your own. From the second you two make eye contact, you'll feel as if you've known each other forever. Don't be surprised if you end up having a nice, long heart-to-heart chat about reincarnation.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

Outgoing? Sociable? Who, you? You bet you are. It's what you're most famous for. You're so famous for it, in fact, that when you're even a little bit down in the dumps, your friends and family don't know how to handle it. They've seen you worried lately, so they'll be delighted to see you now in fine form, smiling and laughing like your old self, and it won't feel too bad from your perspective either.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

When you're feeling this positive, it's easy to see how those good feelings might be contagious. Go ahead and spend some time with the people you love. Make them laugh, dole out a whole bunch of hugs, and be sure that they all understand that you'd do anything to make them feel good now. Oh, and don't be surprised if the person you love most teases you into doing their bidding. Not that you'll mind, of course.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

The best part of the wonderful favor a dear one is preparing to do for you is the fact that they're doing it for no reason whatsoever. They're interested in only one thing: making you feel better about something that's been bothering you. The gesture will touch you, so much so that you'll feel closer to them than you ever have. You'll want to spend some time thinking about the best way to thank them.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Your analytical side and intuitive side are in conflict right now. You feel like you know the right way to proceed with someone, but there's something deep inside telling you to wait, that you need more information. Which side should prevail? Neither. Right now, you have to balance the two and acknowledge that while you really do feel like this person is on the up and up, you should probably wait a little longer before getting in any deeper with them.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

If anyone knows how to enjoy a good time, it's you, whether you're alone or in a crowd. At the moment, however, you're all set up to put out such positive vibes that you'll be attracting company, and lots of it. You might also attract a person who could end up being more than just a friend. Keep an eye out for someone friendly, exotic, and very different from anyone you've ever met.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

As much as you'd like to cut someone some slack for what's going to feel like the hundredth time, you're just about done passing out sympathy and understanding in that particular direction. Just be sure the frustration you're feeling toward them doesn't infiltrate any of your other encounters. You're set up for a lovely day and an even better evening. Don't let them ruin it.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Every now and then, the Universe steps in, makes an executive decision, and forces us to take a right when we were absolutely sure we'd be taking a left. This is one of those times, and as sensitive as you are, you'll realize it as soon as you open your eyes this morning. When you end up someplace you weren't supposed to be anywhere near, chatting with someone you feel an immediate affinity for, you'll get it. You were supposed to meet.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

If you're just starting to get back into a relationship that has been on hold, you might wonder if going back is the right decision. Things might have changed a lot more than you realized, and it could feel like you two might not make it. But you should give this thing some more time. It's way too soon to make such a drastic decision. Have a talk with the other person involved and see what they think. You're probably on the same page.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Someone's magnetic charm could draw you in today, but don't get drawn in too far too fast. Charm is a powerful force, and it can distract you from important things that you need to take care of. Have your fun, but don't lose sight of your responsibilities. If you indulge too much in flirting or goofing around, you could lose something very valuable to you. Have a good time but don't lose your focus on what really matters.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Prepare yourself for a big meeting with the boss. You've got something to ask them, most likely about a raise, bonus, or promotion you were promised a while back. If you know you've done everything you were asked to do and more (and when haven't you?) that should give you all the confidence you need to broach the subject. That and maybe just a teeny bit of rehearsing in front of the bathroom mirror.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. Which kingdom, established by King Wickramabahu in the 14th century, repelled invasions by the Portuguese and the Dutch in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries and the British in the 19th century, until the signing of a treaty with the British in March 1815?

- A. Burma
B. Goa
C. Kandy
D. Siam

02. Which Apollo mission was the first to land on the moon?

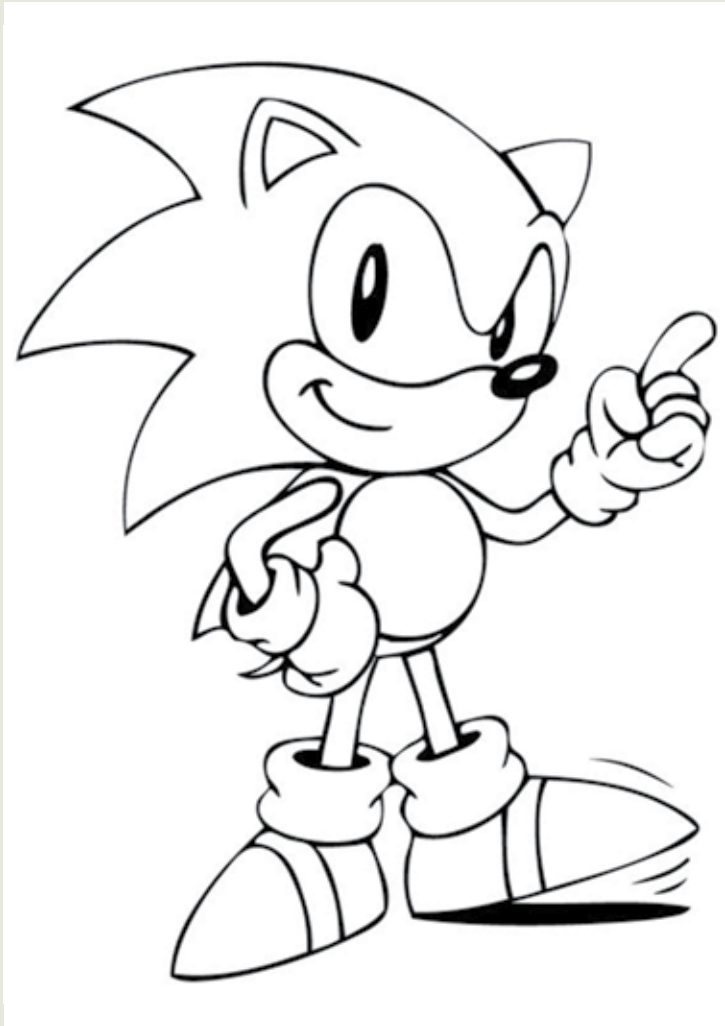
- A. 11
B. 12
C. 10
D. 13

03. In the first half of the 18th century in Great Britain, what drug became so popular, particularly in London, that several laws were passed trying to restrict its use?

- A. Gin
B. Laudanum
C. Morphine
D. Brandy

Answers: 1. C 2. A 3. A

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

G	O	S	U
N	A	W	E
N	U	D	M
G	O	M	L

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

Comoros ex-president Sambhi jailed for life

Ahmed Abdallah Sambhi was convicted of selling passports to stateless people living in the Gulf

Moroni, Comoros - A court in the Comoros on Monday handed down a life sentence for high treason to ex-president Ahmed Abdallah Sambhi, who was convicted of selling passports to stateless people living in the Gulf.

Sambhi, 64, an arch rival of President Azali Assoumani, was sentenced by the State Security Court, a special judicial body whose rulings cannot be appealed.

"Sambhi is sentenced to life imprisonment," court president Omar Ben Ali said, reading out the verdict, which also stripped the former leader of the right to vote and hold public office.

"The court orders his property and assets to be confiscated to the benefit of the public treasury."

Sambhi was convicted in absentia after refusing to attend proceedings.

He briefly appeared at the first hearing, where his lawyers unsuccessfully asked the judge to recuse himself as he had previously sat on the panel that indicted their defendant.

"The composition of the court is illegal. I do not want to be tried

by this court," Sambhi said before boycotting further sessions.

"This sentence is entirely consistent with what we have seen so far, a judicial charade guided by members of the government which ended in life imprisonment for the biggest political opponent of the current regime," Sambhi's daughter Tisslame Sambhi told AFP.

Sambhi, who led the small Indian Ocean archipelago between 2006 and 2011, pushed through a law in 2008 allowing the sale of passports for high fees.

The scheme aimed at the so-called bidoon - an Arab minority numbering in the tens of thousands who cannot obtain citizenship.

The former president was accused of embezzling millions of dollars under the scheme.

"He betrayed the mission entrusted to him by the Comorans," public prosecutor Ali Mohamed Djounaid told the court last week as he requested a life sentence.

'Peanuts'

The prosecution said the loss to the public purse amounted to



This file photo shows former Comorian President Ahmed Abdallah Sambhi (second from right), escorted by Gendarmes, arriving at the courthouse in Moroni on November 21 (AFP)

more than US\$1.8bn - more than the impoverished nation's GDP.

"They gave thugs the right to sell Comoran nationality as if they were selling peanuts," said Eric Emmanuel Sossa, a lawyer for civilian plaintiffs.

But Sambhi's French lawyer Jean-Gilles Halimi said 'no evidence' of missing money or bank

accounts had been put forward to suggest a crime.

Sambhi was originally prosecuted for corruption, but the charges were reclassified as high treason, a crime that 'does not exist in Comoran law', Halimi said. The former president had already spent four years behind bars before he faced trial, far ex-

ceeding the maximum eight months. He was originally placed under house arrest for disturbing public order.

Another lawyer, Mahamoudou Ahmada, said the court went beyond prosecutors' requests in stripping his client of his civil rights.

Government secretary gen-

eral Daniel Ali Bandar said he was 'satisfied' that the trial had gone ahead 'peacefully' but was waiting to see what would happen in civil proceedings.

"More than prison sentences, Comorans want to know what happened to the millions of euros

hamed Ali Soilihi, the runner-up in a disputed 2016 vote, was handed a 20-year jail term.

Both men were convicted in absentia. The authorities issued international arrest warrants for both men.

Troubled nation

Sambhi studied in Saudi Arabia, Sudan and in a theological school in Iran, and typically dressed in the traditional garb of Iranian clerics - a style that gave him the nickname of 'ayatollah'.

A former French archipelago of three islands of some 900,000 people located north-west of Mozambique, the Comoros has endured years of political turmoil.

Since independence in 1975, the country has endured more than 20 attempted coups, four of which were successful.

Assoumani seized power in 1999 and was re-elected in 2016 in a vote marred by violence and allegations of irregularities.

He was able to extend his term thanks to a controversial referendum in 2018 that changed the constitution.

AFP

Sambhi is sentenced to life imprisonment. The court orders his property and assets to be confiscated to the benefit of the public treasury

OMAR BEN ALI

that have been embezzled," he said. Among other defendants, French Syrian businessman Bashar Kiwan, who had accused the government of seeking to pressure him into testifying against Sambhi - something denied by the presidency - was sentenced to 10 years.

Former vice president Mo-

Police: Cocaine 'super-cartel' busted in Dubai, Europe

The Hague, Netherlands - Police have dismantled a huge drugs 'super-cartel' that controlled a third of Europe's cocaine trade, arresting 49 people in various countries, including six chief suspects in Dubai, Europol said on Monday. The huge international operation seized 30 tonnes of the drug and led to arrests in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Spain, the European Union's police agency said in a statement.

The crackdown - which involved one 'extremely big fish' from the Netherlands and based in Dubai - largely targeted cocaine coming from South America through the ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp.

"The drugpins, considered as high-value targets by Europol, had come together to form what was known as a 'super cartel' which controlled around one third of the cocaine trade in Europe," Europol said. "The scale of cocaine importation into Europe under the suspects' control and command was massive and over 30 tonnes of drugs were seized by law enforcement over the course of the investigations."

Europol said Dubai had arrested two 'high-value' suspects who are linked to France, two connected to the Netherlands and another two linked to Spain.

Ten people were arrested in Belgium, six in France and 13 in Spain. Another 14 people were arrested in 2021 in the Netherlands as part of the same operation, the Hague-based organisation said.

The arrests were the latest in a series that followed a police hack of sophisticated encrypted telephones used by organised crime networks last year, Europol said.

Police took down the SKY ECC phone platform last year, after secretly using it for a long period to listen in on what

were supposed to be secure communications between drug traffickers.

'Extremely big fish'

Dutch prosecutors said they would request the extradition of the suspects from the United Arab Emirates.

One of the suspects was a 37-year-old man with dual Dutch and Moroccan nationality, who was held for allegedly importing thousands of kilograms of cocaine into the Netherlands in 2020 and 2021.

"These are serious criminal offences pertaining to international drug trafficking, mainly from South America via the ports of Antwerp and Rotterdam," the Dutch public prosecution service said in a statement. The other was a 40-year-old dual Dutch-Bosnian national, it said.

"One of the Dutch suspects is an extremely big fish," a Europol source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The Dutch suspects were allegedly linked to Ridouan Taghi, who was arrested in Dubai in 2019 and is now on trial in the Netherlands, the source said. Taghi is accused of running a huge Amsterdam-based cocaine smuggling group and faces charges including murder.

Spain's Guardia Civil said a total of 13 people had been arrested in Barcelona, Madrid and Malaga on November 8 after 698kg (1,539 pounds) of cocaine were found in a container in the port of Valencia.

The head of the smuggling operation, a British national, fled to Dubai after an attempted arrest in Spain and was continuing to direct operations from there, it said in a statement. The cocaine was imported from Panama in central America and his supplier, a Panamanian, also lived in Dubai, it said.

AFP

Canada unveils new strategy for Asia-Pacific region

Ottawa, Canada - Canada on Sunday unveiled its new economic and diplomatic strategy for the Asia-Pacific region, allocating 2.3bn Canadian dollars (US\$1.7bn) over the next five years to the plan aimed at mitigating risks posed by China.

The government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has based its strategy on five major planks: promoting peace and security, notably by sending a warship to the region; bolstering trade and investment; boosting 'feminist international assistance'; financing sustainable infrastructure; and increasing its diplomatic presence.

"The future of the Indo-Pacific is our future; we have a role to



Canadian PM Justin Trudeau (AFP)

play in shaping it. To do so, we need to be a true, reliable partner," Foreign Minister Melanie Joly said in a statement introduc-

ing the policy paper.

She said the new strategy 'sends a clear message to the region that Canada is here, and they can trust we are here to stay'.

In an interview with the French-language daily La Presse to coincide with the introduction of the new policy, Joly said the message being sent was specifically aimed at Beijing, with which Ottawa has had fraught ties.

"There is a fundamental problem with the fact that China currently does not respect international norms and tries to change or interpret them to its own advantage," Joly told the newspaper.

While the minister said the

government would not go so far as to advise Canadian companies not to do business in China, she said: "My job is to explain the risk. And I'm saying there is a geopolitical risk in doing business in China."

The government said the strategy 'presents a comprehensive road map to deepen our engagement in the Indo-Pacific over the next decade, increasing our contributions to regional peace and security'.

The announcement comes on the heels of Trudeau and Joly's trip to Asia for the Group of 20 summit in Indonesia, the ASEAN summit in Cambodia and a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

forum in Bangkok.

At the G20 summit, Chinese President Xi Jinping scolded Trudeau in an unusual public dressing-down, caught on video.

Relations between the two countries plunged into the deep freeze when Canadian authorities arrested Huawei executive Meng Wanzhou in 2018 for allegedly flouting US sanctions on Iran.

Beijing later detained two Canadian citizens in China, Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig, in what critics called a tit-for-tat response.

Meng and the two Canadians were released last year after lengthy negotiations.

AFP

Cuban municipal polls close as opposition deplores pressure

Havana, Cuba - Cubans voted on Sunday in municipal elections amid a grave economic crisis that some feared would weaken turnout and with the opposition charging that several of its candidates faced unfair pressure.

Polls closed at 7pm (0000 GMT), one hour later than expected and after a day of voting without incident, AFP journalists reported.

Elections officials said the extension was due to requests made by polling stations and voters themselves.

As of 5pm, according to the National Electoral Council, nearly 64 per cent of Cuba's eight million eligible voters had cast a secret ballot, selecting more than 12,400 municipal delegates, or councilors, from the 27,000 candidates nominated by show of hands in neighbourhood assemblies.

Earlier on Sunday, President Miguel Diaz-Canel, fresh off a trip that took him to Algeria, Russia, Turkey and China, went with his wife Lis Cuesta to vote at a polling station in Playa, west of Havana.

He later told reporters that the electoral process confirmed the political and social stability of the island, despite the 'economic suffocation' he said the



Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel votes during the first round of municipal elections for councilors in Havana on Sunday (AFP)

United States was imposing on Cuba. The government had mounted an intense get-out-the-vote campaign on social media, as well as in the press and on television - both controlled by the ruling Communist Party, which oversees the election process but does not nominate candidates.

But the opposition platform known as the Council for the Democratic Transition in Cuba (CDTC), which promotes change and pluralism in the country through legal means, called on people to abstain,

citing unfair pressure by the government.

'Political police'

Its vice president, Manuel Cuesta, told AFP that three of the group's candidates had been prevented 'by the political police' from participating in neighbourhood assemblies because they appeared to have a good chance of winning.

He said a fourth candidate, Jose Cabrera, was nominated in the southeastern city of Palma Soriano but never made it to the ballot over 'threats of losing his

job' and other difficulties.

The Cuban government has branded opposition members as US 'mercenaries.'

These elections are the first step in a unique electoral system. Councilors elected on Sunday will form municipal governments that will propose 50 per cent of the candidates for provincial assemblies and the National Assembly, which in turn elects the Council of State and the Cuban president from among its members.

The other 50 per cent are put forward by social organisations close to the government.

In theory, the system allows any Cuban to reach parliament, but the opposition maintains that Communist Party militants have the ability to prevent any opposition member from being elected.

Adding uncertainty to the election - the first since Diaz-Canel came to power in 2018 - is the economic crisis that has brought shortages of food and medicine and daily blackouts to the island, fueling an outflow of migrants and potentially increasing abstentionism.

Candidates who fail to win with an outright majority this Sunday will face a runoff on December 4.

AFP

WHO to rename Monkeypox as mpox

Geneva, Switzerland - Monkeypox is to be renamed mpox in English, the World Health Organization announced on Monday, in a bid to avoid stigmatisation stemming from the existing name. Monkeypox received its name because the virus was originally identified in monkeys kept for research in Denmark in 1958, but the disease is found in a number of animals, and most frequently in rodents.

"Following a series of consultations with global experts, WHO will begin using a new preferred term 'mpox' as a synonym for monkeypox. Both names will be used simultaneously for one year while 'monkeypox' is phased out," the UN health agency said in a statement.

"WHO will adopt the term mpox in its communications, and encourages others to follow these recommendations, to minimise any ongoing negative impact of the current name and from adoption of the new name."

The disease was first discovered in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the spread among humans since then mainly limited to certain West and Central African countries where it is endemic.

AFP

Iran frees hundreds after WC win over Wales

Tehran, Iran - Iran has released more than 700 prisoners after the national team's World Cup football victory over Wales, the judiciary's Mizan Online website said on Monday.

It announced that '709 detainees were freed from different prisons in the country' following the 2-0 victory on Friday.

Among those are 'some arrested during the recent events', Mizan Online said, making indirect reference to demonstrations which have shaken Iran for more than two months.

It gave no further detail.

The ongoing protests were triggered by the September 16 death in custody of Mahsa Amini, 22, after her arrest by morality police for an alleged breach of Iran's strict dress rules for women.

Other Iranian media separately reported that prominent Iranian actor Hengameh Ghaziani had been released on bail after her arrest for having supported the protests.

Two of the most prominent figures detained over the demonstrations - former international footballer Voria Ghafouri and dissident Hossein



This image grab from a UGC video posted on Friday, reportedly shows workers walking out of the Isfahan Steel Company and cheering, in the city of Isfahan in central Iran (AFP)

Ronaghi - were also let out on bail, reports said.

State news agency IRNA reported on Monday that former state television host Mahmoud Shahriari, 63, had been released after two months in prison for 'encouraging riots'.

Iran on Friday scored twice deep into stoppage time to stun Wales and breathe new life into

its World Cup campaign ahead of a politically charged showdown on Tuesday against the United States.

Iran lost its first World Cup match to England, 6-2.

Iran's judiciary says more than 2,000 people have been charged since the start of the protests.

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Volker Turk last week said around 14,000 people have been arrested.

summons German envoy

Meanwhile, Iran on Monday summoned the German ambassador to protest last week's UN Human Rights Council decision, based on a resolution co-spon-

sored by Berlin, to probe Iran's response to nationwide protests.

It is the third time since the demonstrations started more than two months ago that Tehran has called in Berlin's representative to the Islamic republic. At an urgent session requested by Germany and Iceland, the United Nations' highest rights body voted on Thursday to create a high-level investigation into Iran's deadly crackdown.

The state news agency IRNA said Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs had called in Germany's ambassador, Hans-Udo Muzel, 'following the initiative of Germany to hold a special session' of the UN rights council 'about the recent events in our country'.

Iran on Friday said it 'totally rejects' the 'useless' resolution and would not recognise the fact-finding mission created by the rights council.

The foreign ministry reiterated this argument on Monday.

"The hasty and instrumentalised use of the human rights question and the adoption of political approaches to pressure independent countries should definitely be condemned," ministry spokesman Nasser

Kanani said at his weekly press conference.

"These actions will not contribute to the promotion of human rights."

In late October Iran's foreign ministry summoned Muzel to protest comments by German officials which 'incite riots' in the Islamic republic, IRNA reported previously.

Earlier this month, the ministry again called in Berlin's representative following remarks by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz who asked: "What kind of government are you that shoots at its own citizens?"

An Iranian foreign ministry official condemned those remarks and protested Germany's 'destructive attitude'.

Iran labels the protests 'riots' which it says were encouraged by Western countries.

Other ambassadors, including from France and Britain, have also been called in over the past few weeks.

During Thursday's session in Geneva, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said more than 300 people had been killed since Amini's death.

AFP

Pakistan Taliban call off ceasefire

Islamabad, Pakistan - Pakistan's Taliban said on Monday they have called off a shaky ceasefire agreed with the government in June and ordered fighters to stage attacks across the country.

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a separate entity to the Taliban in Afghanistan but sharing a similar Islamist ideology, have been responsible for dozens of violent attacks and hundreds of deaths across Pakistan since emerging in 2007.

"As military operations are ongoing against mujahideen in different areas ... so it is imperative for you to carry out attacks wherever you can in the entire country," it said in a statement.

The TTP held sway over vast tracts of Pakistan's tribal belt for a time, imposing a radical version of Islamic law. Its fighters were largely driven out of Pakistan into Afghanistan but have been emboldened by the Afghan Taliban's return to power in Kabul.

AFP

Iraqi PM says fraction of stolen \$2.5bn retrieved

Baghdad, Iraq - Iraq has recovered 'part' of US\$2.5bn in public funds fraudulently withdrawn from a government account, the prime minister said on Sunday, calling on guilty parties to hand themselves in and return all the money.

Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said a wealthy businessman implicated in the theft from tax authorities had given back US\$125mn out of more than US\$1bn that he 'confessed' to having received.

Businessman Nour Zuhair Jassem will be subject to an assets freeze and released on condition of recovering the remaining funds within two weeks, Sudani added.

The scandal has provoked widespread ire in Iraq, an oil-rich country ravaged by endemic corruption.

According to a document from the country's tax authority, the colossal sum was allegedly expropriated between September 2021 and August this year through 247 cheques cashed by five enterprises.

The money was subsequently withdrawn from the companies'



Iraq's Prime Minister Mohamed Shia al-Sudani speaking next to piles of cash during a live address on Sunday (AFP)

accounts, the document showed.

The owners of those accounts - most of whom are on the run - are subject to arrest warrants.

'The competent authorities have been able to retrieve a first tranche amounting to 182.6bn Iraqi dinars,' equating to more

than US\$125mn, Sudani said.

His comments came during a live address, and he was flanked by piles of banknotes stacked in packages.

Jassem was arrested late last month at Baghdad airport when he tried to leave the country on a private jet, authorities said at

the time.

The prime minister said the judiciary had reached an agreement with the accused that he return all the money.

Another suspect, who was arrested in Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region, is the subject of proceedings to transfer him to Baghdad.

"We call upon all the suspects subject to arrest warrants in this case to hand themselves in and hand back the stolen funds," the prime minister said.

"Arresting the thieves and those who aided them is very important," Sudani added.

"But the most important thing is the return of the funds. What does it matter if so and so is in prison if the (US\$2.5bn) is not in the state's coffers?"

Tax officials and public bodies are implicated in the scandal, he said, adding that their identity 'will be revealed at the end of the investigation'.

"We will spare no one," Sudani vowed.

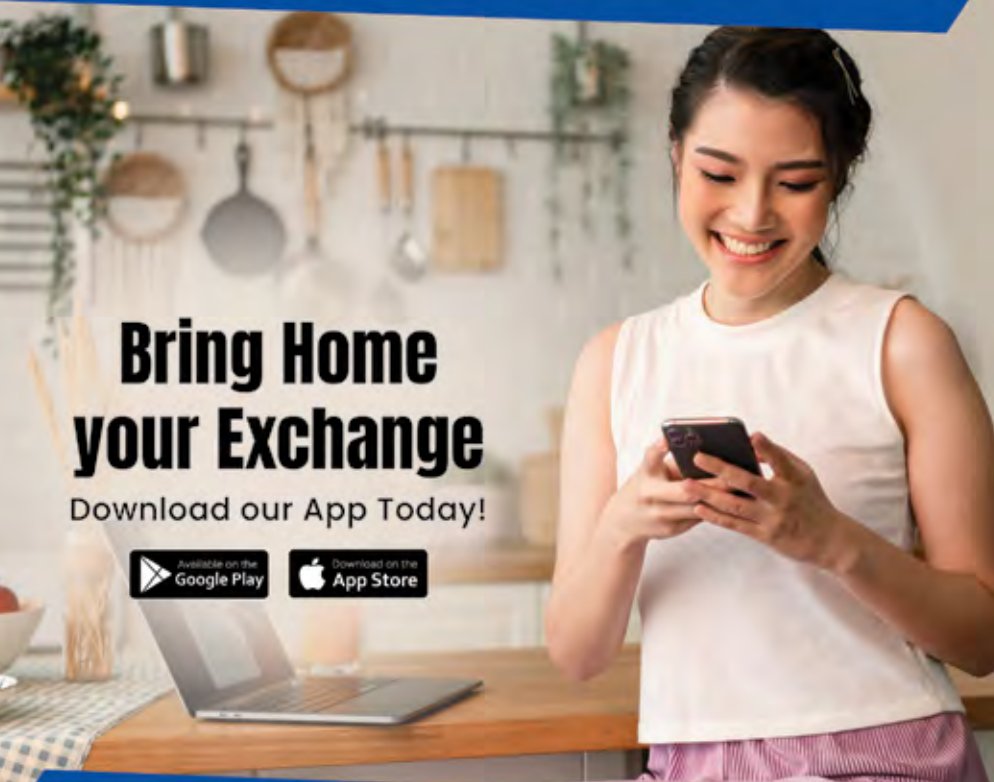
The top echelons of power routinely evade accountability in Iraqi corruption cases.

AFP



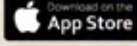
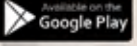
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INDIA

Chopped into 10 pieces; another macabre murder in the capital



A team of Crime Branch, R K Puram, is seen with the woman and her son arrested for allegedly killing the woman's husband, in New Delhi on Monday (ANI)

New Delhi, India - As the investigation into the brutal Shraddha Walker's murder case is still underway, the Crime Branch of Delhi Police have cracked a similar crime in the eastern part of the national capital.

Delhi Police crime branch has arrested a young man in east Delhi's Pandav Nagar for allegedly murdering his step-father with the help of his mother at their residence in Trilokpuri. The accused have been identified as Poonam and Deepak while the deceased as Anjan Das, who married Poonam in 2017 after her ex-husband died in 2016.

They chopped the body into 10 pieces after killing the man

Mother Poonam and son Deepak dumped the body pieces of Anjan Das in isolated areas like behind the Ramlila Maidan and New Ashok Nagar drain.

RAVINDER YADAV

and these pieces were stored in a fridge and disposed of over several days. The woman and her son confessed to the grisly crime, police said.

On May 30, the accused made deceased Anjan drink liquor and mixed sleeping pills in it. Then they slit his throat and left the body in the home for a day for the blood to drain out completely. Then they chopped

off the body in 10 pieces.

The police, however, have recovered six parts of the body.

"On June 5 some body parts were recovered in Ramlila maidan, East district. Then for the next three days two legs, two thighs, a skull and a forearm were recovered and then the case was filed," DCP Crime of Delhi Police Amit Goel said.

Special CP Crime Ravinder

Yadav said, "Mother Poonam and son Deepak dumped the body pieces of Anjan Das in isolated areas like behind the Ramlila Maidan, and New Ashok Nagar drain. They also buried the skull."

According to the Crime Branch officials, the accused buried the deceased's skull.

The police said that Poonam was furious after she learnt that her husband had sold her jewellery and sent the money to his first wife, who lived in Bihar with their eight children.

"The situation in Anjan's family worsened after Deepak got married and the deceased used to have ill intentions towards his wife and one of

Deepak's sisters who used to live with them. Anjan used to take all their earnings but wasn't earning himself," Ravinder Yadav further said.

DCP Crime, Delhi Police Amit Goel said that efforts were made to identify the body for which door-to-door verification was done. "It seemed like a gruesome murder. Footages were analysed, door-to-door verification was done and the body was identified," Goel said.

Goel further said that It was found that the deceased was missing for the last 5-6 months and there was no missing complaint filed by the family members.

ANI



A general view of the Supreme Court, in New Delhi (ANI)

Forced religious conversions: Centre files affidavit in SC

New Delhi, India - The Central government on Monday told the Supreme Court that the right to freedom of religion does not include a fundamental right to convert other people to a particular religion.

It is 'cognizant of the gravity and the seriousness' of the issue, said the Centre in its affidavit filed on a PIL claiming that fraudulent and deceitful religious conversion is rampant across the country. Such issue of conversion shall be 'taken up in all seriousness by the Union of India and appropriate steps shall be taken as the Central government is cognizant of the menace', the Centre said in its affidavit.

"The right to freedom of religion certainly does not include the right to convert an individual through fraud, deception, coercion, allurement or other such means," it said.

The central government further said that nine States over the course of the years passed enactments seeking to curb this practice. Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka and Haryana are the States which already have legislation in place

on conversion, the affidavit added. The affidavit stated that 'such enactments are necessary for protecting cherished rights of vulnerable sections of the society including women and economically and socially backward classes'.

The right to freedom of religion, and more importantly, the right to the consciousness of all citizens of the country is an extremely cherished and valuable right which ought to be protected by the executive and the legislature, it said.

As the matter came up for hearing, a bench headed by Justice MR Shah said the issue of forced religious conversion is 'very serious' and asked the Centre to file a detailed affidavit to make its stand clear.

It asked the Centre to file an affidavit with instructions from the State governments.

The bench has now posted the matter for hearing on December 5. Earlier, the top court had remarked that forced religious conversion is a 'very serious issue' and may affect the 'security of the country' along with the freedom of conscience of citizens as far as religion is concerned.

ANI

Landslide in Cameroon: Death toll rises to 15

Yaoundé, Cameroon - At least 15 people died when a landslide engulfed members of a funeral party in the Cameroonian capital of Yaounde, the local governor said on Monday.

The victims had gathered in marquees at the top of a hill for a memorial service on Sunday when the ground collapsed.

At least one of the tents and the people beneath it were swept away.

"We are now at 15 dead," Naseri Paul Bea, governor of the Centre region which includes Yaounde, told AFP, updating an earlier death toll of 11.

A dozen members of the fire brigade were shovelling away a huge mound of reddish soil at the foot of the hill to search for victims. Nearby, a stream of people went to two houses to present their condolences to the newly-bereaved families.

Sunday's service had been intended as a memorial tribute to five members of a local association who had died this year.

The disaster took place in Yaounde's working-class district of Damas, on its eastern outskirts. Four large white marquees remained on the hill's summit, at the edge of what seemed to be a ridge, beyond which the ground had opened up, an AFP journalist saw.

The search had been suspended late on Sunday evening. Marie Claire Mendouga, 50, attended the ceremony but her tent was not affected by the landslide. "We had just started to dance when the ground collapsed," she told AFP on Sunday.

She said she 'went to dig with my hands' to try to extract victims, and was still covered in brown clay.

AFP

Eight civilians dead as Somalia hotel siege ends

Mogadishu, Somalia - Somali security forces have ended an hours-long siege by Al-Shabaab militants who stormed a popular hotel in the capital Mogadishu overnight, killing eight civilians, the national police spokesman said on Monday.

The attack by the Al-Qaeda-linked insurgents began around 8pm (1700 GMT) on Sunday in a hail of gunfire and explosions, as they besieged the Villa Rose hotel which is frequented by parliamentarians and other government officials.

Around 21 hours after the attack started, Sadik Dudishe, a spokesman for the national police, told reporters 'the clearance operation in the Villa Rose hotel has ended'.

The militants 'killed eight civilians who stayed in the hotel and the security forces succeeded in rescuing about 60

civilians, no one among the civilians was wounded', he added.

One member of the security forces also died in the operation, he said.

The Villa Rose is located in a 'secure' central part of the capital just a few blocks from the office of Somalia's President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, raising questions about how the militants were able to evade the numerous checkpoints in the area. Al-Shabaab, which has been trying to overthrow Somalia's central government for 15 years, claimed responsibility for the attack.

The group has intensified attacks against civilian and military targets as Somalia's recently elected government has pursued a policy of 'all-out war' against the Islamists.

Earlier, on Monday morning,

The attack by the Al-Qaeda-linked insurgents Al-Shabaab began around 8pm (1700 GMT) on Sunday in a hail of gunfire and explosions, as they besieged the Villa Rose hotel

witnesses near the scene described loud explosions and gunfire.

"I saw several military vehicles with special forces heading towards the hotel, and a few minutes later there was heavy gunfire and explosions," said witness Mahad Yare.

In a statement late on Sun-

day, the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS), a 20,000-strong military force drawn from across the continent, praised the 'swift' security response to the attack.

The Villa Rose website describes the hotel as the 'most secure lodging arrangement in Mogadishu' with metal detectors and a high perimeter wall.

On October 29, two cars packed with explosives blew up minutes apart in Mogadishu followed by gunfire, killing at least 121 people and wounding 333 others.

It was the deadliest attack in the fragile Horn of Africa nation in five years.

Closely guarded zone

At least 21 people were killed in a siege of a Mogadishu hotel in August that lasted 30 hours be-

fore security forces were able to overpower the militants inside.

The latest hotel siege has raised questions as to how the militants managed to reach the closely guarded heart of Mogadishu's administrative district undetected.

Armed checkpoints block roads into the area, which also hosts a detention facility for high-value terror suspects overseen by the National Intelligence and Security Agency.

Somalia's environment minister, Adam Aw Hirsi, who lives in the Villa Rose, said the attack was not a demonstration of an 'emboldened' Al-Shabaab.

"To the contrary, the desperate move shows that the terror kingpins running for dear life are throwing their last kicks. We'll not let up the war," he posted on Twitter.

AFP

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NASAL VACCINES

SPRAY OF RELIEF

Nasal vaccines can elicit antigen-specific systemic and mucosal immune responses and are considered viable alternatives to IM vaccines, given their efficacy and ease of administration. However, only a few nasally administered vaccines are in use currently.

A concerted global effort to develop safe and effective nasal vaccines is necessary to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and the threat of pandemics in the future, according to a recent article in News-Medical Life Sciences.

Nasal vaccines induce pathogen-specific dual protective immunity at mucosal surfaces and systemically throughout the body. Consequently, nasal vaccines both, prevent pathogen invasion and reduce disease severity. Because of these features, nasal vaccines are considered to be a next-generation tool for preventing respiratory infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

Mucosal immune responses

Nasopharyngeal-associated lymphoid tissue (NALT) is a primary site of immune induction for vaccines and invading pathogens. NALT contains B, T, and antigen-presenting cells (APCs) and is covered by a layer of microfold cells - specialised cells for antigen uptake. APCs phagocytose the absorbed antigens, process and present them to naive T cells. Stimulated T lymphocytes produce interleukin (IL)-5 and transforming growth factor (TGF)- β for B cell activation. Then, B cells differentiate into immunoglobulin (Ig) A-positive (IgA+) B cells. The antigen-specific T and IgA+ B cells traverse to effector sites, where the IgA+ B cells terminally differentiate into plasma cells producing IgA.

The plasma cell-produced polymeric or dimeric IgA binds to the polymeric Ig receptor on epithelial cells and is transported as secretory IgA (sIgA) into the nasal cavity lumen. sIgA is pivotal in mucosal immunity for capturing upper respiratory tract pathogens and preventing adhesion to mucosal surfaces.

A critical feature of acquired immune

responses is the induction of immunologic memory for long-term immunity against infection. Tissue-resident memory cells remain in non-lymphoid mucosal tissues without entering circulation for long periods. These cells are activated upon re-exposure to antigens and promptly induce effector functions.

Nasal vaccine delivery systems

Mucosal tissues have mechanisms to exclude foreign particles, which may prevent the efficient delivery of vaccine antigens. Therefore, a delivery vehicle that can circumvent this obstacle is necessary. To this end, non-replicating and replicating delivery systems have been developed. Replicating systems involve recombinant viral vectors that multiply in the host and deliver vaccine antigens continuously.

Concerns over nasal vaccines

FluMist Quadrivalent is the only nasal influenza vaccine approved by the United States (US) Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Even if a cold-adapted attenuated vaccine could be developed by decreasing virulence, it will not be approved for use in older adults and infants, as nasal administration of live vaccines can result in medically significant wheezing.

Another critical concern is the reversion to the replicative state of vaccines using the whole pathogen. As such, recombinant protein subunit-based vaccines appear safer than live vaccines. Nevertheless, recombinant antigens require delivery systems and tend to induce weak responses, warranting co-administration of adjuvants as immunostimulants.

Furthermore, another inactivated nasal influenza vaccine (Pandemrix) increased the risk of narcolepsy. Nasally administered substances may traverse into the brain via the olfactory epithelium and bulbs, potentially affecting neural functions. Because of the nasal cavity's proximity to the central nervous system (CNS), nasal vaccine candidates must be tested before clinical application to ensure that vaccine components do not affect the CNS.



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ENDURANCE EXERCISES

GOING AN EXTRA MILE

Whether you are getting ready for a marathon or simply want to enjoy every bit of a hiking trip with friends, it is important to build endurance to conduct yourself with ease

Most people tend to associate endurance with the ability to run a little more or bike/swim a little more than others in the fray. Endurance, however, is your own capacity to handle immense pressure of unusual activity without crumbling under its weight.

In fitness, there are two types of endurance - cardiorespiratory endurance and muscular endurance. Cardiorespiratory endurance refers to your ability to perform sustained cardio-intensive activities (think a marathon, not a sprint), says celebrity trainer Ashley Verma, founder of

Define London Barre. Muscular endurance, however, refers to your muscles' ability to exert force repeatedly or for extended periods of time. Which, in particular, you choose to focus on might depend on your specific fitness goals. Here are seven tips for building endurance:



FOCUS ON RESISTANCE TRAINING

When resistance training with your body weight, resistance bands, or weights like dumbbells and kettle bells, shift your focus from pure strength (think less than eight reps per set with heavy weight) or muscle growth (eight to 12 reps with moderate weight) to muscle endurance (12-plus reps per set with lighter weight). This increases the amount of time your muscles spend under tension, which trains them to have greater endurance over time.

ADD CARDIO BURSTS

To give strength workouts more of an endurance edge, Gabi Garbarino, CPT, founder of Gabi's Fitness Studio, recommends adding cardio bursts into the mix. "I love to incorporate jump squats, jump lunges, mountain-climbers, and pretty much any short cardio burst that involves spiking the heart rate," she says. Not only does this train your cardiovascular endurance by keeping your heart pumping, but also demands that your muscles keep working between sets of other exercises.

INCORPORATE INTERVALS

Though progressively increasing the duration of your cardio workouts can help you build endurance, another surefire way to make your inner engine more efficient is with intervals, suggests trainer Sandrine Cassis, CPT, founder of Empowered Fitness. For maximum results, incorporate challenging interval sessions two or three times a week. "You can play around with time, increasing your interval times to further push yourself," Cassis says. To get started, do 40 seconds of work and 20 seconds of rest.

PUMP UP THE JAMS

Sometimes, all that stands between you and a powerful sweat session is the perfect playlist. "Creating an environment you want to move in is the best way to encourage yourself to keep moving," says trainer Michelle Kuhnreich, CPT, creator of BootyByMich. Tinkering with your Spotify in the name of fitness is totally rooted in science, too. One Ergonomics study, for example, found that treadmill runners who increased the volume and tempo of their music ran faster than those who didn't.

PRIORITISE CORE WORK

You know a stable, healthy core is a must for your fitness, but there's more to it than showing off a six-pack. A strong midsection actually comes in clutch during endurance workout efforts. "When you're on the last mile of an endurance run, bike ride, or hike, a strong core can help prevent the body from wasting precious energy by providing a stable foundation against your repeated muscle contractions," says Canada-based trainer Marlene Vale.

FIND YOUR FOCUS

It's easy to zone out or go through the motions during a workout (especially if you're going for a long run or churning out rep after rep after rep). However, connecting your body and mind is a must if you want to tap into (and improve) your true endurance. "Aligning the mind, body, and breath creates a heightened ability to push our physical and mental boundaries," she shares. That's why she recommends doing a meditative routine before taking up exercises. Close your eyes, and take stock of your body.

SWEAT WITH A FRIEND

If you had a study buddy to hold you accountable back in the day, why not apply the same strategy to your training? Having the motivation and support of someone moving with you can inspire and challenge your mental and physical limits when it comes to your workouts. Numerous studies show that working out with a friend can help you sustain your commitment to your activity, enjoy doing it more, and feel less stressed, all of which can help you reach your endurance goals in the long run.

How to take care of skin in winter in Oman



DR SHIBU MOHAMMED
Consultant dermatologist
Badr Al Samaa Group of Hospitals

Most of dry skin disorders like Atopic eczema and psoriasis can be aggravated in winter. How can one prevent this? Read on:

What is Atopic eczema?

Atopic eczema is a chronic long lasting disease that usually appears in infancy and childhood, and may stay in one's teens and adulthood. It causes extreme skin dryness, redness, itching, oozing, crusting, and secondary bacterial infection.

A genetic predisposition plays a major role in this disease.

Atopic dermatitis patients can also associate with thyroid and allergic asthma or allergic rhinitis. The disease can get aggravated by extreme winter climate, dust, pollen, rough wool fabric, sunlight, pet dander and sweating. In some patients, some types of food can aggravate eczema. Physiological stress is also a causatory factor.

How can one prevent it?

Use moisturiser often - every 3 to 4 hours or whenever the skin becomes dry. You can use a moisturiser for hands and feet, or a soothing skin balm like glycer-

ine. If the lesions do not respond to moisturiser, consult a dermatologist for further treatment.

The first line of treatment is with local application of steroids. Dermatologists advise to use steroids along with moisturiser regularly for few days and slowly reduce the application frequency, day by day. Most of patients tend to apply steroids regularly for a longer time, which is harmful. Also, some apply steroids on and off, which is also very bad for the skin.

The next line of treatment involves topical calcineuron inhibitors which are an alternative

for steroids. These weaken the immune system's concentration on atopic eczema so that it recedes. This can be used for 8 weeks.

The new molecule crisaborol - recently made available in Oman - is an excellent molecule for atopic eczema. It can be used from infants from 3 months, with no side effects.

What is psoriasis?

Psoriasis is an auto immune disorder wherein genetics plays a major role.

In this condition, the body's immune system gets confused

and attacks itself, making new skin cells to grow. Skin cells gets replaced every 4 to 7 days, instead of the usual 21 to 28 days. This creates thick, red, swollen patches of skin covered with silvery scales called plaques. These patches become inflamed, itchy and bleed. Psoriasis can involve skin, scalp, nails, and joints - causing psoriatic arthritis.

Aggravating factors

- Always prevent dryness with moisturisers
- Avoid excess exposure to sunlight
- Avoid smoking

- Avoid medicine aggravating lesions
- Avoid foods that aggravate lesions
- Stress also can aggravate

Treatment

- Use moisturisers at all times
- Use steroid-based creams and ointments.
- Other therapies, like phototherapy, systemic therapy are also available.

Both eczema and psoriasis are not communicable disease. Touching them or close contact with patients will not spread the disease.

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FIFA WORLD CUP

Qatar2022



TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022 MUSCAT DAILY 13



KUDOS, KUDUS

Young star's double strike helps Ghana sink South Korea in thriller



Ghana's Mohammed Kudus scores against South Korea in their Group H match on Monday (AFP)

Doha, Qatar - Mohammed Kudus scored twice as Ghana beat South Korea 3-2 in a pulsating encounter on Monday to keep their World Cup hopes alive and leave Paulo Bento's side facing an early exit.

Mohammed Salisu opened the scoring against the run of play midway through the first half at Education City Stadium and Ajax midfielder Kudus doubled the Black Stars' lead.

But the Asian side, who looked toothless in the first half, roared back after the break, pulling level through a quickfire double from forward Cho Gue-sung either side of

the hour mark.

Ghana looked shell-shocked as the Korean fans celebrated wildly but they were back in front in the 68th minute when Kudus finished calmly at the back post after Inaki Williams failed to connect with a cross from the left.

The result takes Ghana into second in Group H on three points.

Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal will have six points and secure qualification for the last 16 if they beat Uruguay in the later kick-off in Qatar. Despite their efforts, South Korea look likely to crash out of the tournament at the group stage for

GROUP H	
SOUTH KOREA	2
GHANA	3

the third straight World Cup.

The Asian side, captained by Son Heung-min, were quicker to settle, forcing a succession of corners as they dominated possession but they were unable to fashion a shot on target in the entire first half.

Son looked uncomfortable in the black face mask he is wearing after having surgery for a facial injury he

suffered while playing for Spurs, constantly readjusting it.

Ghana, who lost their opener 3-2 to Portugal, struggled to gain a foothold in the game.

But the match totally changed complexion in the 24th minute when the impressive Jordan Ayew, playing down the left for Ghana, swung in a cross following a free-kick.

South Korea failed to clear and Southampton centre-back Salisu finished with his left foot, sparking wild scenes of celebration among the Ghana fans decked out in red, white and green.

The goal revitalised the African nation, who reached the quarter-finals in 2010, with South Korea struggling to deal with their physicality and direct approach.

Now playing with flair and confidence, Ghana poured forward and doubled their lead in the 34th minute when Kudus powered a header home after a pin-point Jordan Ayew cross from the left.

Captain Andre Ayew - the brother of Jordan - called his men into a team huddle on the pitch and the players got soaked by the sprinklers before they went off for their half-time break.

The Koreans at last produced an effort on target in the 53rd minute, when goalkeeper Lawrence Ati Zigi punched away a header from Cho.

But the Korean found the net just minutes later, heading home a cross from substitute Lee Kang-in, who had just been brought on by Bento.

And they were level just three minutes later when Cho headed home Kim Jin-su's ball from the left, sparking scenes of delirium among the Korean fans.

Now Ghana were rocking but they restored their lead midway through the second half through Kudus.

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Casemiro scores as Brazil down Switzerland to march into last 16

Doha, Qatar - A Brazil side lacking spark without the injured Neymar needed a late strike from Casemiro to edge out Switzerland 1-0 on Monday as the five-time winners secured their place in the World Cup last 16 with one game to spare.

The Brazilians had been frustrated by an obdurate Swiss side at Doha's Stadium 974 and it looked as if they would have to settle for a point after a Vinicius Junior strike in the second half was disallowed for offside following a VAR check.

But then, with seven minutes remaining, Bruno Guimaraes flicked the ball on to Casemiro just inside

GROUP G	
BRAZIL	1
SWITZERLAND	0

the box and the Manchester United midfielder's volley flew into the net with the help of a slight but significant deflection off Manuel Akanji.

Tite's side are just the second team to qualify for the last 16 after France and the only side apart from the holders to have won both group matches so far in Qatar.

With six points they will be

tempted to rest players for their final Group G game against Cameroon on Friday, when a draw will secure them top spot.

Switzerland, meanwhile, failed to muster a shot on target but remain on course to qualify too, with the 3-3 draw between Serbia and Cameroon earlier meaning a win against the Serbians will take Murat Yakin's side through and a draw may also suffice.

They have made a habit of making at least the first knockout round at major tournaments, while Brazil are in Qatar to win a sixth World Cup and nothing less will do.

AFP



Brazil's Casemiro celebrates with Vinicius Junior after scoring against Switzerland in their Group G match on Monday

 Qatar2022

IN THE NIC OF TIME

Niclas Fuellkrug strikes late to salvage Germany World Cup draw with Spain

Al Khor, Qatar - Niclas Fuellkrug's late equaliser snatched Germany a morale-boosting 1-1 draw with Spain in a heavyweight World Cup clash on Sunday, leaving both sides' hopes of qualifying for the last 16 still in the balance.

Alvaro Morata's flicked finish had Spain on course to secure qualification from Group E, but the electric Jamal Musiala and Fuellkrug combined to foil La Roja and restore some German pride.

Costa Rica's surprise win over Japan earlier eased some pressure on Germany after their shock loss to the Asian side, but they were unable to capitalise for large periods in a battle for the ball against Spain.

The four-time world champions suffered a humiliating group-stage exit in Russia four years ago, and Morata's strike at Al Bayt Stadium had them on the ropes, but Werder Bremen striker Fuellkrug finished brilliantly to divide the points.

Spain lead Group E on four points, from Japan and Costa Rica on three each, while Germany have one, with a final round of matches to come.

"We really wanted to pull (this game) back, that was very important for the feelings (in the camp)," Fuellkrug told German TV network ZDF.

"We still have room for improve-



Germany's Niclas Fullkrug scores against Spain in their Group E match at the Al Bayt Stadium in Al Khor, north of Doha, on Sunday (AFP)

ment, but we can hope that everything turns out well in the final game."

The only World Cup group-stage clash to pit two former champions against each other lived up to its top billing in intensity and tactical intrigue, with both sides set on trying to dominate possession and press extremely

high.

Germany coach Hansi Flick rejected suggestions his side had been distracted in their shock opening defeat by Japan because of their pre-game protest against FIFA "silencing teams" and the taut opening exchanges quickly ensured all focus was on the

football.

Flick cut Kai Havertz from his line-up and deployed Thomas Mueller up front after their shocking opening-day capitulation, hoping for a quick reaction.

However, Spain almost took the lead in the seventh minute when

Manuel Neuer palmed Dani Olmo's powerful drive from range onto the woodwork.

It seemed like they were picking up where they left off after their 7-0 demolition of Costa Rica, but Germany steeled themselves, keeping Luis Enrique's side at bay.

Clinical Morata

Spain goalkeeper Unai Simon relied on his footwork under pressure as La Roja sought to dominate possession.

One mistake handed Serge Gnabry an opportunity, but he fired wide.

Neuer erred with the ball at his feet too, with Germany similarly looking to build from the back, but Ferran Torres could not capitalise.

Antonio Ruediger powered home a header from a free-kick, but his celebration was cut short after VAR caught him half a step ahead of the Spanish defence, while Simon made a fine save to foil Joshua Kimmich.

Just when Luis Enrique's side seemed to have lost their grip on the game, they broke the deadlock.

Morata, on for Torres, finished clinically at the near post from an inviting low cross from Jordi Alba after 62 minutes. It looked like it was enough for the 2010 champions, but Fuellkrug - on only his third international appearance - decided otherwise, sneaking in behind substitute Alejandro Balde and lashing past Simon with seven minutes remaining.

Spain, who need a point to be certain of progressing, face Japan on Thursday, while Germany need to beat Costa Rica and hope La Roja do not lose.

"They are a great team, they had one big chance and they took it," Morata told Spain's TVE.

They man-marked our best players and they are a team that could be among the favourites to win the World Cup, so we have to take the positives and keep working."

AFP



Belgium coach Roberto Martinez is about to bring in Romelu Lukaku as a substitute during their Group F match against Morocco on Sunday (AFP)

Last chance for Belgium's 'too old' golden generation to make an impression

Doha, Qatar - Belgium's much-vaunted team have one last chance to extend their final World Cup together this week after crashing to defeat by Morocco, with coach Roberto Martinez and his players under mounting pressure.

Anything other than victory against Croatia on Thursday could see the world's second-ranked side heading home after the group stage.

Kevin De Bruyne said in an interview with *The Guardian* before the 2-0 loss to Morocco that his team was "too old" and had "no chance" of winning the World Cup.

Martinez insisted after the game that it might have been a "double bluff" from the Manchester City star, but if he was being serious, it would have been hard to disagree based on their performances in Qatar so far.

Spaniard Martinez has largely stuck by the experienced players who have reached at least the quarter-finals at

each of the past four major tournaments.

In the game against Morocco and the fortunate 1-0 win over Canada, Belgium were overrun, outpaced and offered no real threat going forward.

The absence of record goalscorer Romelu Lukaku through injury has been a blow.

The last six years have provided the best spell of sustained success in Belgium's history, with the third-place finish at the 2018 World Cup in Russia the closest the current team have come to lifting a major title.

Ten of the 14 players who featured in the semi-final loss to eventual winners France four years ago are still in the squad. Seven of the starting XI against Morocco are in their 30s - Thibaut Courtois, Jan Vertonghen, Toby Alderweireld, Thomas Meunier, Axel Witsel, De Bruyne and captain Eden Hazard.

AFP

I did tests and it showed I have a knee sprain, which is annoying me a bit. I played through the pain but the important thing is that I could help the team and we're still strong. The knee's improving, I have to do good recovery work and I hope to be able to play (against Senegal)

ENNER VALENCIA



MOMENT IN TIME



THAT AIN'T ME: Cameroon's Bryan Mbeumo controls the ball while Serbia's Strahinja Pavlovic falls flat on his back during their match on Monday (AFP)

TODAYS
MATCHES



**ECUADOR
VS
SENEGAL
7 PM**



**NETHERLANDS
VS
QATAR
7 PM**



**WALES
VS
ENGLAND
11 PM**



**IRAN
VS
USA
11 PM**

Luis Enrique's thoughts with late daughter

Al Khor, Qatar - Spain coach Luis Enrique said his thoughts were with his late daughter Xana on what would have been her 13th birthday, after his side's 1-1 World Cup draw with Germany on Sunday.

Xana died from bone cancer in 2019, aged nine, during a period in which Luis Enrique stood down from the Spain job before later returning.

The coach paid tribute to her on the morning of the game with a video on social media and said he was coping with what happened naturally.

"It was a special day for my family, for a while we have thought about living through this as a natural part of life," said Luis Enrique.

"We don't physically have our daughter, but we think about her a lot.

"That is how life works. It is not just happiness, but also knowing how to manage these moments."

Luis Enrique left his post in June 2019, with Xana passing away in August before the coach returned to the helm of the Spain team in November 2019.

He took Spain to the semi-finals of Euro 2020 and after two games his team are top of Group E at the World Cup, needing a point from their last game against Japan to progress.

Despite conceding a late goal against Germany that stopped them from virtually sealing qualification for the last 16, the coach was content.

AFF



Spain coach Luis Enrique crouches on the sidelines during their match against Germany at the Al Bayt Stadium on Sunday (AFP)

Morata's time may be now for Spain after underwhelming decade

Al Khor, Qatar - Spain and Atletico Madrid striker Alvaro Morata has a star-studded CV, spending time at Real Madrid, Juventus and Chelsea, but is rarely considered an elite striker.

Two La Liga titles, two Serie A titles and two Champions League trophies feature in his honours list, and yet, at 30, it feels as if Morata has underwhelmed for much of his career.

However, it was his well-taken strike that sent Spain ahead against Germany in their 1-1 World Cup draw on Sunday, and another sign that finally, Morata's time to shine has arrived.

"Now is all," insist the Qatar World Cup organisers, a slogan pasted around Doha and yelled out by pitch-side announcers, but one Morata can take to heart, after years of nearly, not-quites and almosts.

Morata's finish from Jordi Alba's low cross was lethal, leaving Manuel Neuer with no chance.

The forward, who came on as a substitute against both Germany and also Costa Rica, in Spain's emphatic 7-0 opening-day rout, scored and set up a goal against Los Ticos.

Morata has put in good performances with Diego Simeone's Atletico Madrid this season, despite only five goals in 14 La Liga matches.

He netted a last-gasp goal for Spain against Portugal in September to send La Roja into the Nations League final four.

And even though Luis Enrique has thus far chosen winger Marco Asensio ahead of him in the starting striker spot, Morata seems sure of himself and able to take his chances when they come.

"I feel comfortable in the national



Spain's Alvaro Morata celebrates after scoring against Germany in their Group E match at the Al Bayt Stadium on Sunday (AFP)

team, I am proud to be here," Morata told a press conference after he was named man-of-the-match against Germany. "It is not easy, the demands on us and the pressure are very high, whether you are a starter or a substitute. "I want to win all the games, I'm a soldier like everyone else, and we'll go to the death together. As well as being a great team we are a great group and very united."

Struggles

Morata started his youth career at Atletico but switched to Real Madrid

and made his debut in 2010 for the first team under Jose Mourinho.

The next few years moved slowly, although he did make an appearance off the bench in the 2014 Champions League final, with Madrid beating Atletico in extra time.

That summer Morata signed for Juventus, in search of regular football, netting in both legs of the Champions League semi-final to knock Real Madrid out -- but Barcelona triumphed in the Berlin final.

Madrid exercised a buy-back clause in the summer of 2016 and Morata be-

came a useful part of the squad for a season, even though he was part of Zinedine Zidane's second-string side, behind Karim Benzema in the pecking order.

With a league and Champions League double in his pocket, Morata decided to try his luck in the Premier League with Chelsea.

But Morata lost his place to Olivier Giroud and in January 2019, he was shipped off to his first youth side, Atletico, on an 18-month loan - although they quickly decided to make the deal permanent.

Boxer Alvarez threatens Messi over World Cup jersey 'insult'

Doha, Qatar - Champion boxer Saul 'Canelo' Alvarez issued a warning to Lionel Messi after a video emerged of the star celebrating Argentina's win over Mexico with a Mexican jersey on the floor. The video shared on social media showed Messi seemingly touch the Mexican jersey with his foot while he and his teammates jumped up and down in their changing room following Saturday's 2-0 win.

"Did you see Messi cleaning the changing room with our jersey and flag?????" wrote Mexican Alvarez, a four-weight champion boxer, on Twitter.

"He had better ask God that I don't find him!!!"

Alvarez's outburst elicited immediate responses from those defending Messi and claiming there was nothing unusual about a football jersey being on the floor after a match.

Argentina captain Messi had apparently swapped shirts with his Mexico counterpart Andres Guardado.

Former Argentina and Manchester City striker Sergio 'Kun' Aguero weighed in on the debate, replying to Alvarez.

"Mr Canelo, don't look for excuses and problems, you probably don't know about football and what happens in the changing room," wrote Aguero on Twitter.

"The jerseys are always on the floor after a game because of the sweat."



Cameroon's Vincent Aboubakar celebrates with Bryan Mbeumo and Jerome Ngom Mbekeli after scoring against Serbia (AFP)

Cameroon fight back to hold Serbia in high-scoring thriller

Doha, Qatar - Cameroon kept their hopes of making the last 16 of the World Cup alive on Monday after fighting back from two goals down to draw a thrilling Group G encounter with Serbia 3-3.

Rigobert Song's team looked almost dead and buried after goals from Strahinja Pavlovic, Sergej Milinkovic-Savic and Aleksandar Mitrovic gave Serbia a 3-1 lead early in the second half. But substitute Vincent Aboubakar and Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting snatched a draw with two quick-fire strikes just after the hour mark to leave both Cameroon and Serbia on a single point, two behind group leaders Brazil and Switzerland.

Had they lost, Cameroon would have been relying on the Swiss beating Brazil in order to not be eliminated with a game to spare, but instead, the west Africans still have a chance of

GROUP G		
	CAMEROON	3
	SERBIA	3

getting out of the group stage for the first time since 1990.

Cameroon have a tough task ahead as they play Brazil in their final match, which according to reports they will play without first-choice goalkeeper Andre Onana who was dropped from the matchday squad just hours before kick-off following an unspecified disciplinary issue.

Media reports suggest that Onana has been sent home from the World Cup after a disagreement with Song, but that pre-match turmoil didn't stop Cameroon putting in a fighting display against a Serbia team who probably

deserved to win on the balance of play.

Mitrovic was almost invisible in Serbia's defeat to Brazil but here he was involved from kick-off, the Fulham forward unlucky not to give Serbia the lead in the 11th minute when he crashed a shot off the post from a tight angle following a neat exchange of passes with Dusan Tadic.

Cameroon comeback

But Mitrovic only had himself to blame for not opening the scoring six minutes later, shanking an awful first-time finish wide when, after a mix-up in the Cameroon defence, the ball dropped at his feet with only Onana's replacement Devis Epassy to beat.

And Castelletto punished the Serbs for Mitrovic's miss in the 29th minute with the simplest of finishes after ghosting in at the back post to meet Nicolas Nkoulou's flick-on at a corner.

AFF

RASHFORD HAILS 'UNBELIEVABLE' RONALDO EXPERIENCE

Doha, Qatar - England forward Marcus Rashford said on Sunday it had been an "unbelievable experience" playing alongside Cristiano Ronaldo at Manchester United and described him as one of his idols.

Ronaldo left United last week when the club said they had reached a mutual agreement with the player to terminate his contract with immediate effect.

The separation came after the five-time Ballon d'Or winner had heavily criticised United manager Erik ten Hag in a TV interview and accused the club of "betraying" him.

Rashford played with Ronaldo during the 37-year-old's second stint at United, having signed for the club's academy during the Portuguese's first spell.

"Listen, it's been an unbelievable experience to play with him," Rashford said, speaking in a press conference at England's World Cup base in Doha.

"He's obviously one of my idols and someone I've always looked up to," he said.

"So to have the opportunity to play with him is unbelievable and I'll take that with me and it's something that I can keep with me forever.

"So I wish him all the best. We obviously want to thank him for the things that he's done for Manchester United and wish him all the best in the rest of his career."

Ronaldo has yet to announce his next club.

AFF

To have the opportunity to play with him is unbelievable and I'll take that with me and it's something that I can keep with me forever

MARCUS RASHFORD





GOLDEN GLOW

Omani pair take overall gold at 2022 RS Venture Connect World Championships

Muscat - Oman's Sultan al Wahabi and Ahmed al Balushi sealed the gold medal at the 2022 RS Venture Connect World Championships with a fine display in the Grand Final.

The top ten teams overall - six from the para category and four from the open category - took to the waters in perfect conditions at the Barcelo Mussanah Resort. Each team sailed two races.

Al Wahabi and Al Balushi continued their excellent form from the open category fleet races to sweep to victory in the final. Jens Kroker and Sabine Kroker-Hohmann of Germany won the silver medal and Australia's Genevieve Wickham and Grant Alderson took bronze in third. Fellow Australians Christopher Symonds and Manuela Klinger of

FINAL STANDINGS

PARA

1. Piotr Cichoki and Olga Gornas-Grudzien (POL)
2. Vasilis Christoforou and Theodoros Alexas (GRE)
3. Guilherme Teixeira and Pedro Cancio Reis (POR)

OPEN

1. Sultan Al Balushi and Ahmed Al Balushi (OMA)
2. Jens Kroker and Sabine Kroker-Hohmann (GER)
3. Genevieve Wickham and Grant Alderson (AUS)

Australia narrowly miss out on a podium position in fourth.

Piotr Cichoki and Olga Gornas-Grudzien of Poland finished first in the Para category ahead of Vasilis Christoforou and Theodoros Alexas of Greece in second. Guilherme Teixeira and Pedro Cancio Reis of Portugal finished third.

The winners received their

prizes from HE Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousuf, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, at the closing ceremony.

Dr Khamis Al Jabri, CEO of Oman Sail, said: "The 2022 RS Venture Connect World Championships, which is the first international event of this scale held in the Sultanate of Oman for per-

sons with disabilities. We've been delighted to see this edition attract the highest number of participants in the history of the championship - 39 teams from 19 countries competed this week."

"It is our hope that the success of this championship serves to promote para sailing throughout the region and across Asia, and that more events can be held on our shores as we support World Sailing in its bid to reinstate Para Sailing for the LA28 Paralympic Games and beyond."

Yousuf Al Ojaili, bp Oman President, added: "We are honoured to be the main sponsor of the region's first RS Venture Connect World Championships. Watching Oman's first parasailing team excel in their competition with international teams, has

shown us that we have achieved our target at bp - which is to provide inclusive opportunities to Omanis with disabilities."

The 2022 RS Venture Connect World Championships were the first exclusively para sailing event to be held in Oman and helps position the nation as a regional hub for growing the sport across the world.

The RS Venture Connect World Championships is proudly supported by title sponsor bp Oman, along with the Oman Paralympic Committee, Oman Maritime Sports Committee, Oman Air, the Barcelo Mussanah Resort, Tanuf, the International Maritime College Oman (IMCO), RS Sailing, and environmental partners Clean Seas and Environment Society of Oman (ESO).

Shaheen a 'big loss' for Pakistan, says England coach McCullum

Islamabad, Pakistan - The absence through injury of fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi is a "big loss" to Pakistan in the three-match Test series starting this week, England head coach Brendon McCullum said Monday.

The lanky left-arm pacer -- Pakistan's main wicket-taker in all three formats -- was left out of the series following a knee injury sustained during the Twenty20 World Cup final in Australia earlier this month.

The 22-year-old also had his appendix removed earlier this month.

England practised for the first time at Rawalpindi stadium on Monday, a day after arriving in Pakistan on their first Test tour since 2005.

The first Test starts on Thursday.

McCullum said Shaheen had made huge progress since he played with and then coached the fast bowler during the first two editions of the Pakistan Super League (PSL) in 2016 and 2017.

"I know him pretty well. He's a wonderful bowler and he's turned into a fine leader for Pakistani cricket," McCullum told a press conference. "Shaheen's obviously a big

loss."

In his absence, Pakistan will rely on young Naseem Shah as well as Mohammad Wasim Junior and Haris Rauf -- who haven't played at Test level.

But McCullum praised Pakistan's fast-bowling talent.

"You look at their team sheet and you see talent... you see some that might not be developed talent, but it's talent."

"You need to respect that, and you need to find a way to be able to be well-researched and well-planned about what's going to come at you."

England were due to visit Pakistan last year but pulled out a week after New Zealand abandoned their limited-over series on security grounds minutes before the first match.

They then re-scheduled the tour in two phases, having visited Pakistan for a Twenty20 series two months ago.

McCullum, who took over as England coach last year, admitted Pakistan would be strong at home.

"It's a very good Pakistan squad, it's well-rounded," said McCullum, under who England have won six out of seven Tests.

AFP



Brendon McCullum



Ruturaj Gaikwad

India's Gaikwad hits seven sixes in one over

New Delhi, India - India batsman Ruturaj Gaikwad on Monday smashed an unprecedented seven successive sixes in one over of a 50-overs domestic match -- courtesy of a no-ball.

Gaikwad, who has played one ODI and nine Twenty20 matches for India, hammered 42 runs for Maharashtra in a seven-delivery over against Uttar Pradesh.

The quarter-final of the Vijay Hazare Trophy -- India's interstate 50-over competition -- took place at the world's biggest cricket stadium, in Ahmedabad.

Gaikwad is the first player to hit seven sixes in one over in a List A category match.

But Lee Germon of New Zealand holds the all-time List A record with eight sixes in a bizarre 77-run over of multiple deliberate wides and no-balls in a 1990 Shell Trophy match,

when Wellington intentionally gave away runs to try to tempt Canterbury into recklessness.

Gaikwad, 25, finished unbeaten on 220 as his team made 330-5.

Left-arm spinner Shiva Singh was on the receiving end of his six-hitting blitz in the 49th over.

Gaikwad made his T20 international debut last year after a sterling performance as an attacking opener with Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League.

It is the second record by an Indian batsman in as many weeks, after Tamil Nadu's N Jagadeesan smashed 277 against Arunachal Pradesh, the highest ever score in the 50-over format, surpassing the 268 of England's Alistair Brown against Glamorgan in 2002.

AFP

Afghanistan qualify directly for 2023 ODI

New Delhi, India - Afghanistan have gained direct qualification to next year's 50-over World Cup after their abandoned second one-day international against Sri Lanka, the International Cricket Council said.

The Afghans and the hosts took five Super League points

each in Pallekele on Sunday, keeping the visitors in seventh place in the table and guaranteeing them at least eighth position.

Hosts India and the seven highest-ranked other teams earn direct entry to the 2023 tournament.

Four teams are scrapping for the last remaining direct entry spot -- two-time champions West Indies, Ireland, former winners Sri Lanka, and South Africa.

Sri Lanka will be hoping for a win in the final ODI of the Afghanistan tour on Wednesday

to boost their chances and tie the current three-match series. Afghanistan won the first ODI by 60 runs on Friday.

As well as the hosts, so far defending champions England, New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh and Pakistan have also secured direct entry into

next year's tournament.

The cut-off date for the final Super League standings is on May 31, 2023. The remaining nations will have to play in the qualifying matches along with five associate teams for the final two spots.

AFP

'Golden Girl' PT Usha to be named India's sports chief

New Delhi, India - Former track and field star PT Usha will take over as the first woman president of the Indian Olympic Association, becoming the first former international athlete to head the organisation in more than 60 years.

The 58-year-old multiple Asian Games gold medallist - now a member of parliament - was the only candidate to file a nomination for the post by the deadline. Former sports and current law minister Kiren Rijiju congratulated her on Twitter on Sunday, calling her a "legendary Golden Girl".

Cricket-obsessed India regularly struggles to win Olympic medals despite its 1.4 billion population, with a total of only 35 since 1900.

Usha missed out on a bronze in the 400m hurdles at the 1984 Los Angeles Games by just 1/100th of a second but still became a national sports icon.

Nicknamed the "Payyoli Express" - after the town of her



PT Usha

birth in the southern state Kerala - she dominated Indian athletics for close to two decades, winning 11 Asian Games medals including four golds in Seoul in 1986, before retiring in 2000.

Her election - which is formally due on December 10 - represents a step change in the organisation of Indian sports, which have largely been run by

administrators for decades.

The Maharaja of Patiala, Yadavindra Singh, who played in one 1934 cricket Test, was head of the IOA from 1938 to 1960.

A succession of bureaucrats and state-level cricketers followed, with veteran administrator Narinder Batra resigning as IOA president earlier this year.

AFP



Heading is to be restricted to one training session a week

Brain injury risk: Heading restricted for Scottish clubs

Glasgow, United Kingdom - Heading for professional footballers in Scotland is to be restricted to one training session a week under new guidelines aimed at reducing the risk of long-term brain injuries.

Players will be banned from heading the day before and after a match, but there remains no restriction on heading during games.

The guidelines put in place by the Scottish Football Association (SFA) come after Glasgow University research that showed former footballers were three-and-a-half times more likely to die from brain disease.

"The historic University of Glasgow study (FIELD), which found an increased risk of neurodegenerative disease in retired professional footballers, compared to a matched population control group, has been a catalyst for a radical rethink of football guidance," said SFA chief executive Ian Maxwell.

Heading has already been banned in under-12s football in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The new guidelines have been introduced after consultation with Scotland's 50 clubs across the professional men's and women's game.

AFP