

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (UK), on the occasion of assuming the position of prime minister. In his cable, His Majesty expressed his sincere sentiments to Prime Minister Sunak, wishing him good health, happiness and success in carrying out his duties to achieve further progress and prosperity. His Majesty also wished the relations between the two countries and their peoples further development and growth. – ONA



OMAN, BAHRAIN TO BOOST TRADE



HM AND KING HAMAD REVIEW COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES

MUSCAT: A joint statement was issued by the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Bahrain on the visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the Kingdom of Bahrain, reading as follows: “In response to a cherished invitation from King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik made a visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain from October 24 to 25.

In an atmosphere of amity and fraternity embodying the depth of historical relations between Oman and Bahrain and their peoples, an official session of talks was held by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Sultan of Oman, and King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain, in the presence of Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

The two sides explored the march of bilateral relations and areas of joint cooperation, with a view to upgrading

them to more comprehensive levels to help realise the common goals and meet the aspirations of the two peoples.

JOINT COOPERATION

The two sides also underscored the significance of developing joint cooperation in economic, commercial and investment fields to open wider vistas for the engagement of the private sector in the two countries, to exchange visits of trade delegations and augment commercial exchange in a manner that generates benefits for all.

In this context, emphasis was laid on the sincere efforts exerted by the Supreme Joint Ministerial Committee to consolidate ties of fraternity, develop cooperation in different spheres and elevate it into more comprehensive spheres to help meet the aspirations of the two countries’ peoples.

The two sides expressed satisfaction

- TALKS HELD IN AN
ATMOSPHERE OF AMITY AND
FRATERNITY
- STEPS TO DEVELOP JOINT
COOPERATION IN ECONOMIC
FIELDS
- BAHRAIN-OMAN
INVESTMENT COMPANY
ESTABLISHED
- ARAB SUMMIT TO ENHANCE
JOINT ARAB ACTION
- CALL FOR A FAIR AND
COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION
TO PALESTINIAN CAUSE
- BOTH SIDES SEEK POLITICAL
SOLUTION IN YEMEN

with the signing of agreements, memoranda of understanding and executive programmes in different fields, noting that this would contribute to the refurbishment of cooperation and the enhancement of fraternal relations between the two countries’ peoples.

Following the keenness of the two countries’ leaders to maximise the volume of investments and expand trade exchange, Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry inked documents to initiate the establishment of ‘Bahrain-Oman Investment Company’ to serve as a cornerstone for streamlined investment, a meeting point for investors and a springboard for more partnership aimed at generating fruitful business among private sector enterprises.

The two sides discussed the GCC march and the efforts made by member states to consolidate cooperation. They

stressed the need to secure the solidarity of the GCC and ensure the collaboration of its countries and peoples so that they could confront all current challenges and realise the GCC economic unity.

The two sides expressed their aspiration for a positive outcome from 31st Arab Summit, to be held in Algeria early next month (November 2022), hoping that the summit would enhance joint Arab action, protect Arab national security and achieve the aspirations of Arab peoples for more security, growth and prosperity. The two sides discussed the latest developments in the regional and international arenas. They underlined the importance of their joint cooperation and coordination within regional and international organisations and forums in a way that serves their mutual interests, enhances efforts to consolidate the pillars of regional security and stability and help maintain international peace and security.

New British PM vows to rebuild trust



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Partial solar eclipse in Muscat



DETAILS ON P4

Omani Youth Day celebration today



DETAILS ON P4



His Majesty, King of Bahrain hold talks

MANAMA: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain held a bilateral meeting at Al Sakhir Palace in Manama on Tuesday. The two monarchs finalised discussions over ways of upgrading relations on all levels to serve the two peoples' aspirations and accomplish the desired integration in all fields.

His Majesty the Sultan also met King Hamad at his residence in Al Sakhir Palace.

Cordial conversations were exchanged during the meeting. Aspects of the existing, advanced cooperation between the two countries were discussed in light of the distinguished relations binding the two countries and their peoples.

A range of matters of common interest were also discussed. The meeting was attended from the Omani side by HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs; Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidy, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court; Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office; Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior; Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister; Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance; and Sayyid Faisal bin Hareb al Busaidy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

It was also attended from the Bahraini side by Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad al Khalifa; Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad al Khalifa; Shaikh Khalid bin Ahmed bin Salman al Khalifa, Minister of the Royal Diwan; Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed al Khalifa, Commander-in-Chief of Bahrain Defence Force; Gen Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah al Khalifa, Minister of Interior (Head of the Mission of Honour); Shaikh Ahmed bin Ateyatalla al Khalifa, Minister of Royal Court Follow-up; Dr Abdul Latif bin Rashid al Zayani, Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa bin Salman al Khalifa, Minister of Finance and National Economy.

Bahrain Crown Prince holds luncheon for His Majesty

MANAMA: In honour of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, held a private luncheon at Al Rawda Palace on Tuesday. King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of Bahrain attended the luncheon. The luncheon was attended by members of Bahrain's royal family and the delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan. — ONA

Oman, Bahrain to boost trade

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The two sides also expressed their keenness to advance efforts aimed at consolidating the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence among countries of the world in a manner that realises security, peace and prosperity for all peoples of the world in implementation of the principles of the UN Charter and the International Law.

They stressed the need to reach a fair and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian cause - a solution that achieves the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people for the establishment of a Palestinian state, with East Jerusalem as its

capital, based on the Two-State Solution and related international resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative.

The two sides also underscored the significance of pursuing the UN efforts to achieve a permanent and comprehensive truce in the Republic of Yemen and reach a political solution to the Yemeni crisis in accordance with approved international measures in a manner that ensures the security, stability and unity of Yemen and achieves the aspirations of Yemeni people for security, stability and development.

The two sides expressed their keenness on joint action

to maintain regional security and foster cooperation towards protecting the freedom of navigation and international trade and combating terrorism, and terrorism financing and fanaticism.

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik voiced his thanks and gratitude to King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of Bahrain for the hospitality accorded to him. He wished the Kingdom of Bahrain further progress and prosperity under the wise leadership of King Hamad. His Majesty the Sultan also invited King Hamad to visit Oman, an invitation that was greatly welcomed by the King of Bahrain. — ONA



MANAMA: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Tuesday visited Bahrain Economic Development Board (Bahrain EDB) as part of his official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain. Upon the arrival of His Majesty the Sultan at the premises of Bahrain EDB, he was received by Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Prime Minister and Chairman of the Economic Development Board. His Majesty the Sultan was also received by Bahraini ministers and senior officials of Bahrain EDB.

The Crown Prince of Bahrain welcomed His Majesty the Sultan and the accompanying delegation. Then, His Majesty the Sultan



watched a visual display on the Bahrain Economic Development

Board presented by Shaikh Salman bin Khalifa al Khalifa,

Bahrain's Minister of Finance and National Economy, who outlined the roles of the Board in enhancing the performance of the Bahraini economy.

The presentation highlighted the relentless efforts exerted by Bahrain EDB in promoting the portfolio of Bahrain at various global markets and attracting investment opportunities to achieve Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.

His Majesty the Sultan commended the efforts made by those in charge of the Bahrain Economic Development Board. He wished the leadership of the Kingdom of Bahrain success in realising the nation's aspirations.

— ONA

Talks between HM, King of Bahrain embody common fraternal visions

MANAMA: Ali bin Saleh al Saleh (pictured), Bahrain's Chairman of Shura Council, has said that bilateral talks between His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of the Kingdom of Bahrain incarnate the deep-rooted historical ties and the monarchs' joint vision for the enhancement of development and prosperity of the two nations.

The two countries' signing a number of agreements, memoranda of understanding and executive programmes affirm their resolve to go ahead with accomplishments in economic, political, investment, educational and health fields, among other areas, and realise the aspirations of their people's interests and ties of kinship, Al Saleh added.

He pointed out that "The blessed visit of His Majesty the Sultan reflects the high status of bilateral relations, which keep gaining impetus and bringing the two nations closer to each



other". The historic visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham will open wider vistas for the two nations and expand the scope of commercial and investment cooperation, said the Chairman of the Shura Council. "The legislative authority took keen interest on utilising parliamentary diplomacy and strengthening parliamentary relations with the Sultanate of Oman, besides emphasising the principles of consultation and coordination, notably at global parliamentary events where a spirit of fraternity and cooperation prevails," said Al Saleh. — ONA



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HM thanks King Hamad’s warm welcome

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik returned home on Tuesday after concluding an official two-day visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain in response to an invitation from King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of Bahrain.

His Majesty the Sultan was received at the Royal Airport by HH Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmood al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers; HH Sayyid Asaad bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for International Relations and Cooperation Affairs, Personal Representative of His Majesty the Sultan; HH Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth; Shaikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council; Khalid bin Hilal al Maawali, Chairman of Majlis Ash’shura; Nasr bin Hamoud al Kindi, Secretary-General of the Royal Court Affairs; Dr Madeeha bint Ahmed al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education; Lt Gen Hasan bin Mohsin al Shraiqi, Inspector General of Police and Customs; Lt Gen Said bin Ali al Hilali, Head of the Internal Security Service; Dr Hilal bin Ali al Sabti, Minister of Health; Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF); Maj Gen Matar bin Salim al Balushi, Commander of the Royal Army of Oman (RAO); Air Vice Marshal



Khamis bin Hammad al Ghafri, Commander of the Royal Air Force of Oman (RAFO); Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO); and Maj Gen Musallam bin Mohammed bin Taman Jaaboub, Commander of the Sultan’s Special Force (SSF).

His Majesty the Sultan was accompanied during the visit by a high ranking official delegation comprising HH Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs; Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidy,

Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court; Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, Minister of the Royal Office; Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidy, Minister of Interior; Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidy, Foreign Minister; Sultan bin Salim al Habsi, Minister of Finance; and Sayyid Faisal bin Hareb al Busaidy, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

His Majesty the Sultan was seen off at Al Sakhr Airbase by the King of Bahrain, Prince Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, members of Bahrain’s Royal Family and Bahraini officials. His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent thanks to King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa of Bahrain following his two-day visit.

His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere appreciation to King Hamad for the warm welcome and hospitality. His Majesty the Sultan lauded the opportunity offered by the meeting with King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa in reviewing the bilateral relations and means of enhancing them in a manner that cements cooperation in various spheres.

His Majesty the Sultan prayed to Allah the Almighty to protect King Hamad and to grant him good health, well-being and a long life and to achieve for the Bahraini people aspirations of further progress and prosperity under the King’s wise leadership. — ONA

‘HM visit to Bahrain takes bilateral relations from strength to strength’

KABEER YOUSUF
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The first visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the Kingdom of Bahrain is of great significance to the outstanding bilateral relations between the Sultanate of Oman and the Kingdom of Bahrain.

These relations, dating back to millennia from the eras of the civilisation of Delmun Bahrain and Magan in Oman, have always been characterised by solid bonds between their leaderships and people.

According to Noreen al Thawadi (pictured), Head of

Correspondents at the Bahrain News Agency (BNA), the Royal meeting that brought together His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa and His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has asserted the importance of further strengthening bilateral ties. This was demonstrated by the agreements signed during the meeting, that covered sectors of strategic importance to both countries.

“We see today a mutual will and determination to



continue developing the levels of cooperation and coordination between Oman and Bahrain. The official statements and commentary on the visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to Bahrain are all optimistic about how the two countries will continue to work together. On following all the material covering the visit, one also cannot miss the tribute given to the late Sultan of Oman, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos, who had been very close to the Kingdom of Bahrain during his 50 years of leadership of the Sultanate of Oman. I personally still recall an image from His

Majesty’s last visit to Bahrain in 2010, where he was seated next to His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa, and the eldest grandson of His Majesty, His Highness Shaikh Isa bin Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa, was seen with them stepping in for a quick exchange with the late Sultan,” she remembered.

She feels that His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik’s reign in Oman launched a new chapter with a fresh outlook in this country, which bears rich history in the region. The initiatives of His Majesty the Sultan over the last nearly three years bring

great promise of modernisation and sustainable achievements to further invest in this country’s big potential. As a key player in the GCC, it is inevitable that Oman will seek to also join forces with countries in this bloc, Bahrain one of them, to serve their mutual interests.

“The people-to-people links between Bahrain and Oman are a very important dimension in our relations. Bahrainis value the history of Oman and admire its vibrant culture, wonderful people, beautiful nature and delicious cuisine. We happen to be the only two Gulf states who are known

for the Halwa, and endearingly compete on who makes it better”

“As a woman, I look with great respect to Omani women, who represent their culture beautifully while proving themselves and their mettle. Omani women are projected to be very ambitious and outstanding in their balancing act of managing work and profession simultaneously, outside the country.”

“As a Bahraini, I look forward to seeing our countries enjoy even higher levels of cooperation and wish the Sultanate of Oman and its people further prosperity and development,” Noreen said.



OCEC to host football fan festival

MUSCAT: A football fan festival will be hosted in Muscat to bring the spirit and celebration of the World Cup to Oman. The festival is set to bring fans and their families closer to the World Cup in Qatar with a variety of exciting activities, competitions and food stalls.

Every World Cup match will also be broadcast live at the festival venue in Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) Gardens between November 20 and December 18.

Speaking on the upcoming Festival, Azzan bin Qasim al Busaidi, Under-Secretary for Tourism and Head of the Steering Committee overseeing the Oman World Cup Programme, said, “The World Cup is one of the most significant sporting events to be held in the region in recent years. The ‘Oman World Cup Programme’ aims to leverage our position as a satellite city to support Qatar’s World Cup efforts and attract fans looking

for the ideal base to stay in and explore while attending the tournament. With the football fan festival as the main attraction of the programme, we intend to bring the excitement and atmosphere of the World Cup to local and visiting fans while also showcasing Oman’s unique history, heritage, beauty and renowned hospitality.”

OMRAN Group CEO Hashil bin Obaid al Mahrrouqi, said, “From the outset, our aim has been to make this a family-oriented, memorable festival that brings fans closer to the action while providing them and their families with fun, exciting and innovative ways to connect and engage through football. With all matches broadcasted live against the stunning backdrop that is our state-of-the-art convention centre, the football fan festival will provide the best possible way for football enthusiasts to experience the World Cup with other fans and family.”

An area of more than 9,000 square metres at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre Gardens will be dedicated to the football fan festival, which will feature a specially constructed fan village catering to all ages, whether they are football fans or not. All World Cup matches will be broadcasted live throughout the festival, with visitors also able to enjoy a wide range of interactive games, innovative technologies, football competitions, live performances, and food and drink outlets offering both local favourites and international cuisine. SMEs from over 60 different categories are currently involved in bringing this ground-breaking project to life.

The festival has appointed Oman’s football icon Ali al Habsi as the official brand ambassador alongside favourite sports personalities Khalil al Balushi, Fatma al Nabhani and Mohammed al Noufali. They will

all join the festival’s promotional activities and on-site activations.

Oman has taken several steps to welcome overseas World Cup 2022 travellers. To facilitate easy access to Oman and frequent travel to Doha to attend the World Cup matches, all Hayya card holders and their immediate family members will be eligible for a free 60-day multi-entry visa.

Oman Air will operate dedicated daily flights between Muscat and Doha from November 20 to December 3. The one-hour flights can be booked easily and come with a fast-track airport service for a seamless World Cup journey, offering a touch of Omani hospitality.

The country offers a range of exclusive hotel packages and special tour rates available for visiting fans, as well as those accompanying them. These include over 20,000 hotel rooms across all budgets, plus a dedicated transportation network to ensure a seamless travel experience. — ONA

HM greets President of Austria

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent greetings to President Dr Alexander Van der Bellen of the Republic of Austria on his country’s National Day. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes of good health and happiness to President Bellen. His Majesty also wished the people of Austria further progress and prosperity. — ONA

Omani Youth Day ceremony today

MUSCAT: His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, will preside over the inauguration of Youth Centre Facilities and the announcement of winners in the Youth Excellence Contest launched by the ministry in September.



The event marks Omani Youth Day, which falls on October 26 every year. The celebration reflects the attention accorded to Omani youth, as proclaimed earlier in a Royal speech by His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, who said: “Youth are the wealth of nations and their inexhaustible resource. They are the hands that build. They are the nations’ present and future, and we are keen to listen to them to perceive their needs, interests and aspirations. They will undoubtedly receive the attention that they deserve.”

The ceremony includes the opening of halls and integrated facilities that provide services for young people in various cultural, artistic and technical fields such as photography, music, painting, emerging

His Highness Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, will preside over the inauguration of Youth Centre Facilities

technologies, studios and laboratories equipped with the latest equipment. The facilities also include training and multi-purpose halls, specialised paper and electronic books, Braille books for visually impaired persons and a Creative Industries Incubator, which was established in cooperation with the Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED). — ONA

Partial solar eclipse witnessed in Muscat



VINOD NAIR
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MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman witnessed a partial solar eclipse on Tuesday. According to falakoman or Oman Astronomical Society, the partial eclipse started at 2:49 pm in Muscat Governorate, peaked at 3:57 pm and ended at 4:58 pm. The timings for the eclipse were slightly different in other governorates of the Sultanate.

While some citizens and residents took steps to not venture out in the sun during the eclipse, for others it was business as usual, apart from not directly

looking at the sun. Falak had made arrangements for live streaming of the solar eclipse in the afternoon. While in certain parts of Russia and Kazakhstan the visibility was to be 80 per cent, the partial eclipse was also visible in most parts of Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asia. The solar eclipse was a partial one, visible over India, except for a large area of the north-eastern states.

The Oman Astronomical Society had urged observers to use welding helmets, solar telescopes and binoculars, and solar eclipse.

Food Bank to open in Buraimi, Dhofar and Suhar; to use waste for compost

LAKSHMI KOTHANETH
@lakshmioman

Save food and stop wastage; while there are conservation measures practiced for water, environment and many other resources, an NGO in the Sultanate of Oman is taking steps to preserve, conserve and recycle food.

Located in Azkaban, the objective of Oman Food Bank (Dayma) is to preserve food and get the most benefit of it in every way, cooked, raw or preserved.

Dayma began its operation in March 2022 and so far they have distributed more than 11,000 meals. The initiative is the brainchild of Ibrahim bin Abdullah al Hosni. The bank salvages food and redistributes.

Many of course wonder if such an initiative would encourage others not to be cautious when planning food for gatherings and should the public be given awareness on the impact of food waste. In this regard, however, the corporate world is seeing the benefit of this initiative for society. Sohar



Islamic recently signed an MoU with Oman Food Bank to enhance awareness on the preservation of food and provide food to those in need with the ultimate objective of attaining social solidarity.

The agreement also aims to spread the culture of the importance of preserving food security and providing food and distributing it to needy families in order to achieve the concept of

social solidarity.

For the team at the Food Bank, time is of at most importance.

“We have to collect the food in 20 minutes and distribute it within two hours. The food has to be consumed within these two hours,” said Ibrahim, marketing in charge.

“Ideally it would be perfect if people would notify us in advance because we have to go through processes and we can be prepared.

When we are called first, a person checks on the quality of food and once approved the label with the details and time are stuck on the package. We have a team to collect the food. In case someone calls in advance but on the day there is no food left, it is fine with us,” he added.

Dayma has another line and that is to do with canned food. They pack cans in a basket and hand them over to the recipients. So far they have distributed 1,045 such baskets to families.

As of now, the collection and distribution is conducted all over Muscat. But they are planning to expand to Al Buraimi, Dhofar and Suhar. And that means expansion in the team.

“We have employees, at the same time we are open to volunteers to provide us the support with whatever they are talented in,” explained Ibrahim.

Meanwhile another line they are developing is recycling food that cannot be consumed. They have the process to convert food waste into compost.



Over 5,000 UTAS students and staff access digital services

AMAL AL RIYAMI
NIZWA, OCT 25

The Centre for Educational Technologies at University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Nizwa developed 14 digital services, which serve over 5,000 students and employees.

The Centre for Educational Technologies is one of the leading centres supporting the teaching and learning processes at UTAS-Nizwa. The Head of the Centre, Eshaq bin Aziz al Mandhari, said that the centre provides the necessary digital services with the latest technologies that support the educational process in the university branch. The laboratories keep pace with safety standards and broaden academic horizons of staff and students.

The centre hosted ten workshops in information security and 8 seminars in creative technology. The number of technical support requests submitted by the centre during the academic year 2020–2021 amounted to



approximately 6,000.

Ayman bin Suleiman al Sabahi, Head of the Computer Division, said: “We are pleased to provide technical support to our students. These services include high-speed computers, wired and wireless infrastructure for all students and staff; designing and managing websites of the university; branch, and finding innovative solutions

to the technical problems facing the university. We are also keen on securing protection of IT networks.” Khamis al Khusaibi, Head of the Educational Services Division, said: “We provide an online learning platform equipped with educational media, lectures and quarterly reports, which a student can access from home. We also provide designs, models and

posters for graduation projects and start-ups to promote entrepreneurship.” Mohammed al Shueili, Head of the Library Services Division, said: “We provide a range of traditional and online information sources related to the academic and research programmes offered by the university. We also aim to develop library services for all beneficiaries in line with their needs and aspirations.”

Conference on blue economy ends today

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, organised the Oman Maritime Exhibition and Conference at Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, on Monday.

Held under the theme ‘Towards Blue Economy and Sectoral Integration’, the three-day event aims to promote the Sultanate of Oman as a global maritime destination.

The opening ceremony was presided over by Dr Saud bin Hamoud al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water

Resources. The participants include representatives of the maritime logistics services and supply chain, port management, aquaculture and maritime marketing sectors.

The conference aims to promote the Sultanate of Oman and attract investments to the maritime economic sector, develop marine projects, exchange expertise and experiences between specialists, concentrate on the maritime sector and highlight its importance for the national economy. It seeks to draw up a

national programme to regulate and upgrade the maritime sector in the Sultanate of Oman.

The conference serves as an international platform for gathering scientific papers to enable researchers and academics to discuss emerging topics and issues related to the maritime sector. It includes sessions and workshops focusing on the development of the blue economy, highlighting investment opportunities and challenges and presenting successful experiences in this sector. — ONA

44 projects shortlisted for PDO Awards

STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The Ministry of Education and PDO organised sessions for evaluating entries for the PDO Award for Renewable Energy. The fifth edition of the competition was devoted to hydrogen energy and finding innovative ways to extract it. Prizes worth RO 5,000 are up for grabs for students in grades 7–12 in public and private schools.

Dr Maya al Azri, Acting Director of the Department of Innovation and Scientific Olympiad, said: “The ministry believes in the importance of private institutions supporting educational programmes that contribute to developing students’ skills and abilities in innovation.”

**MUSCAT MUNICIPALITY**
Advertisement No. (41/2022)

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 below.

Tender No.	E- Tender No.	Description of Tender	Tender Fee	Last Date to Collect the Tender	Tender Return Date	Grade
PRE/22/096	2022/MM/ QS-78	Proposed Walk Way in Wilayat Al Amerat (Al Nahdha Phase 7) (E-Tender)	25	14/11/2022	04/12/2022	Second
PRE/22/142	2022/MM/ HQ-17	Consultancy Services for Supervision of the Construction of Dualization of Al Ansab – Al Jifnin Road (E-Tender)	127	14/11/2022	04/12/2022	First
PRE/22/143	2022/MM/ HQ-18	Consultancy Services for Supervision of the Construction for Upgrading Al Mouj Street and 18th November Street Stage-1 (E-Tender)	72	14/11/2022	04/12/2022	First
PRE/22/088	2022/MM/ QS-41 Re-Call	Renewal of Licenses & Technical Support Services For Security Appliances (Re-Tender-1) (E-Tender)	25	14/11/2022	04/12/2022	Excellent & First

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 (+968 24402200).
- For technical support of E-Bond through e-tendering system please send an email to (esnad@gstb.gov.om) or call (+968 24402200/24402330).

**Sultanate of Oman**
Ministry of Defence
ENGINEERING SERVICES

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

Ministry of Defence invites Contractors/consultant specialized in the under mentioned works and registered with the Govt. Tender Board and Ministry of Defence to participate in the following tender.

Tender No.	Tender Name	Contractors Grade	Last Date to Obtain Tender	Tender Submission Date	Tender Price (RO)
28/2022	Electromechanical Services at SEEB Air Base and ANSAB Camp	Excellent - penalized in HVAC system	3 rd November 2022	5 th December 2022	260/- RO
31/2022	Building Works - Salalah	First and Above	3 rd November 2022	5 th December 2022	215/- RO

*For more information about the above Tenders please visit gate number (14)

- Tender Documents (Electronic Tender Document) can be obtained from the Tender office, Gate No: 14, Muaskar Al Murtafa'a after payment of the tender fee indicated above.
- The Payment should be made electronically by using SMART CARD, VISA CARD and VISA ELECTRON. Sunday to Thursday (0900 – 1300 Hours).
- The Bid to be accompanied by Tender Bond in the value of (1%) of the bid value in the form of a Bank Guarantee or Certified Cheque issued by a local bank and addressed to HE the Chairman of the Tender Committee.
- Bids are to be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to HE the Chairman of Tender Committee and marked with Tender Number and Name. Name of Bidder or any other marks should not be printed on the envelopes.
- Bids to be deposited in the Tender office at Gate No: 14 Muaskar Al Murtafa'a before 1300 hours on the assigned day for submission of the Tender.
- We would like to draw your attention to the importance of adherence to the submission date, request and any queries related should not be submitted to MODES fourteen days prior to submission of offer & that queries must be on electronic (Microsoft word).
- You are requested to submit the following items within your tender submission, failure to submit the required information may result a disqualification of your offer without any further notification.
 - Percentage of Omanisation within the company supported by an authenticated certificate from the Ministry of Manpower (Updated Copy).
 - Detailed priced breakdown to be specified as per scope of works and drawings.
 - Full set of stamped drawings and documents, Tender Form and Tender Bonds to be submitted as hard copy and others documentation shall be as **SOFT COPY** (USB) in two separate files:
 - Financial (**bill 1&2 separated file from bill3**).
 - Technical files.
 - Confirmation of site visit.
 - All addendums and circulars.
 - List of sub-contractors/suppliers and their acceptance letter to this project.
 - List of current and executed projects for the last Five years.
 - Valid Registration Certificates from Tender Board.
 - Financial Statement for the last Three years.

**ASAAS**

Notice of Public Auction Sale

Muscat National Development And Investment Company S.A.O.C. Announces Its Desire To Auction The Following Items.

SRL	Asset Description	QTY
1-	Site Office	As in site
2-	Tables	67
3-	Hoardings	As in site
4-	PC/ LapTop	19
5-	AC Unit	20
6-	Chairs	50
7-	Security Cabin	2
8-	Cupbord	29
9-	TV Units	1
10-	Kitchen Units	6
11-	Office Accessories	7
12-	Electricity Generator	1
13-	Miscellaneous	4

All bids must be submitted in closed envelopes, and the following terms and conditions must be observed:

- All items are available for inspection at the site of A'raya Project, in the Ministries district, Al Khuwair, during official working hours 7:30 AM- 2:30 PM starting from Monday 31st of October 2022 to the end of working hours on Sunday 6th November 2022. All safety and security instructions should be adhered to.
- All items in the above table are for sale, and the auction's winner shall bear all costs of removing and transporting items from the site.
- Every bidder shall pay a bidding guarantee of OMR (200) deposited to the following bank account:
Account Name: Muscat National Development and Investment Co SAOC
Account Number: 01011213840001
Bank Name: Dhofar Bank
*The amount mentioned above is refundable only to those who did not win the auction.

- Any offer without a copy of the guarantee deposit will not be considered.
- All offers are to be submitted in closed envelopes sealed with red wax containing the bid value and a copy of the guarantee deposit mentioned in item (3) above. The outside of the envelope should bear only the title of 'Muscat National Development And Investment Company/ sale of assets. All bids are to be submitted not later than 12:00 PM, Wednesday, 9th November 2022, at Muscat National Development and Investment Company (ASAAS) at Al Khuwair.
- The winning bidder must pay the remaining amount of goods value within ten days of the date of receiving the award notification. Failure to pay the remaining amount shall give the company the right to utilise the guarantee amount paid earlier and to award the tender to the next best offer.
- The winning bidder must remove and transport all items and goods within seven days after depositing the total bidding amount at the company's bank account mentioned above.
- Failure to transport the goods and items within the agreed-upon grace period will automatically entitle the company to collect a penalty fee from the winning bidder, equal to 2% of the total bid value for every week of delay as storing charges.
- The winning bidder shall strictly adhere to safety and security instructions while transporting goods and items.
- The company reserves the right to change the date or cancel the auction without giving reasons.

Note: Individual bidders must present their IDs, and corporate entities must write an authorisation letter for all matters relevant to the auction.
For further inquiries, kindly call: **24392437**

www.asaas.om



Sudan security forces tear-gas protesters

KHARTOUM: Sudanese security forces shot tear gas on Tuesday as thousands of pro-democracy protesters marked the first anniversary of a coup that derailed a transition to civilian rule and sent hunger and inflation soaring.

Waving Sudanese flags, thousands of demonstrators in Khartoum and its suburbs defied security forces who have carried out deadly crackdowns on past rallies, demanding that “soldiers go back to the barracks”.

“No partnership, no negotiation with the putschists,” protesters chanted, calling out what has become a pro-democracy rallying cry.

A year ago to the day, army chief Abdel Fattah al Burhan seized power and arrested the civilian leaders with whom he had agreed to share power in 2019, when mass protests compelled the army to depose one of its own, long-time ruler Omar al Bashir.

Protesters, calling out that the “revolution continues”, have demanded the creation of “a civil democratic Sudan”.

In Atbara, north of the capital Khartoum, “hundreds of students” also took to the streets, resident



Sudanese protesters chant slogans as they march in Omdourman, the capital Khartoum's twin city. – AFP

Adel Mohamed said.

In a bid to stem protests, authorities restricted internet access across the country, online monitor NetBlocks said.

The authorities in Khartoum ordered all public institutions, schools, and businesses shut on

Tuesday, as security forces blocked roads and bridges.

For a year, near weekly anti-coup protests have been met with force, most recently on Sunday when a protester was killed by a bullet fired by security forces, according to pro-democracy

medics.

At least 118 people have been killed while demanding a return to civilian rule, a condition for Western governments to resume crucial aid they had halted in response to the coup.

Cut off from such aid, Sudan

Protesters, calling out that the ‘revolution continues’, have demanded the creation of ‘a civil democratic Sudan’

has plunged into a worsening economic crisis.

Between three-digit inflation and chronic food shortages, a third of Sudan’s 45 million inhabitants suffer from hunger, a 50 per cent increase compared to 2021, according to the World Food Programme (WFP).

The cost of food staples has jumped 137 per cent in one year, which the WFP says has forced Sudanese to spend “more than two-thirds of their income on food alone, leaving little money to cover other needs”.

Many worry that three years after the 2019 uprising that toppled Bashir, signs point to a reversal of their revolution.

Since the coup, several Bashir-era loyalists have been appointed

to official positions, including in the judiciary, which is currently trying the former dictator.

Burhan’s pledge of elections next year is seen as far-fetched, no civilian leaders have taken up the mantle of the army chief’s promised civilian government and international mediation efforts are stalled.

“Sudan doesn’t have the luxury of zero-sum games and political manoeuvres,” UN envoy to Sudan Volker Perthes said on Saturday. “All political actors need to put aside differences and focus on the best interest of the Sudanese people.” On Friday, 31 protesters were injured, including three who were hit in the eye by tear gas canisters, according to pro-democracy medics.

Western embassies on Monday urged security forces “to refrain from using violence against protesters and to fulfil their obligation to protect freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly”.

A broader security breakdown nationwide has also left nearly 600 dead and more than 210,000 displaced as a result of ethnic violence this year, according to the United Nations. — **AFP**



Palestinians look at a damaged car following an overnight Israeli raid in Nablus, in the occupied West Bank. – AFP

Six Palestinians killed in West Bank raids

NABLUS: Six Palestinians were killed in sweeping Israeli raids on Tuesday in the occupied West Bank as the army targeted an emerging armed group, and thousands later massed for the funerals of the alleged gunmen.

The Palestinian health ministry said five people were killed in Nablus in the northern West Bank, where Israel confirmed an overnight operation targeted the “Lion’s Den”, a new group it blames for multiple recent attacks.

Another Palestinian died from a gunshot wound to the chest during overnight clashes with Israeli forces in Nabi Saleh, north of Ramallah, the health ministry said.

Israeli Prime Minister Yair

Lapid said in a statement that Wadi al Houh, whom he described as “the head of the Lion’s Den”, was among those killed in Nablus.

The army said it had carried out a major operation with police and intelligence officers targeting a site “used by the main operatives of the ‘Lion’s Den’”, describing it as a “headquarters and a workshop for making weapons”.

An Israeli military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that “after trying to let the Palestinian Authority contain the group and them failing to do so, and with the rise in attacks... we embarked on an intelligence-based operation to halt the Lions’ Den terror attacks”. — **AFP**

KUAKATA, Bangladesh: At least 16 people died after Cyclone Sitrang slammed into Bangladesh, forcing the evacuation of about a million people from their homes, officials said on Tuesday.

Cyclones — the equivalent of hurricanes in the Atlantic or typhoons in the Pacific — are a regular menace but scientists say climate change is likely making them more intense and frequent.

Sitrang made landfall in southern Bangladesh late on Monday but authorities managed to get about a million people to safety before the monster weather system hit.

Around 10 million people were without power in districts along the coast on Tuesday, while schools were shut across much of the country’s south.

Government official Jebun Nahar said 16 people died, mostly after they were hit by falling trees, with two killed when their boat sank in squally weather in the Jamuna River in the north.

“We still have not got all the reports of damages,” she said. Eight people are missing from a



Residents search for their belongings amid the debris of their collapsed huts after the cyclone Sitrang hits in Chittagong. – AFP

dredging boat that sank during the storm late on Monday night in the Bay of Bengal, near the country’s largest industrial park at Mirsarai, regional fire department chief Abdullah Pasha said.

“Strong wind flipped the

dredger and it sank instantly in the Bay of Bengal,” he said, adding that divers were searching for survivors. People evacuated from low-lying regions such as remote islands and river banks were moved to thousands of multi-

storey cyclone shelters, Disaster Management Ministry secretary Kamrul Ahsan said.

“They spent the night in cyclone shelters. And this morning many are heading back to their homes,” he said. — **AFP**

SEOUL

South Korean president congratulates China’s Xi

South Korean President Yoon Suk-yeol congratulated China’s Xi Jinping after last week’s Communist Party congress, Yoon’s office said.

In a letter sent on Monday, Yoon told Xi he looks forward to communication and cooperation to improve relations between South Korea and China, South Korea’s presidential office said.

Yoon has sought to reassure Beijing that his efforts to strengthen his country’s alliance with the United States is not



aimed at China, which is South Korea’s largest trading partner.

Xi secured an unprecedented third term as leader on Sunday and introduced a new top governing body. — **Reuters**

TEHRAN

‘World’s dirtiest man’ dies in Iran at 94

An Iranian man nicknamed the “dirtiest man in the world” for not taking a shower for decades has died at the age of 94, state media reported on Tuesday.

Amou Haji, who did not wash for more than half a century and was single, died on Sunday in the village of Dejgah in the southern province of Fars, IRNA reported. Haji had avoided showering over fears of “getting sick”, the agency quoted a local official as saying.

But “for the first time a few months ago, villagers had taken



him to a bathroom to wash,” IRNA reported.

A short documentary film titled “The Strange Life of Amou Haji” was made about his life in 2013. — **AFP**

DUBAI

World Bank to provide Lebanon with \$300-500m

The World Bank is ready to provide Lebanon with \$300 to \$500 million this year for social security and other projects relating to food and agriculture, the Lebanese cabinet tweeted, citing the fund’s Vice President for the MENA, Ferid Belhaj.

Already reeling from three years of economic meltdown, Lebanon faces the prospect of its multi-faceted crisis deepening further when President Michel Aoun’s mandate expires in a week from now. The deadline looms



as the country is headed by a caretaker administration, since key parties have been unable to agree on a proper government to replace one whose mandate expired in May. — **Reuters**



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In brief

■ DUBAI



KUWAIT CROWN PRINCE REAPPOINTS SHAIKH AHMAD AS PM

Kuwait's crown prince reappointed Shaikh Ahmad Nawaf al Sabah, the ruling Emir's son, as prime minister and later approved a new Cabinet following legislative polls in the Gulf state. A decree announcing the government formation in the OPEC oil producer named Hussein Ismail as oil minister to replace Mohammed al Fares.

Finance Minister Abdul Wahab al Rasheed and Foreign Minister Shaikh Ahmad Nasser al Sabah kept their posts.

Kuwait held early elections on September 29 in which opposition members made big gains. — **Reuters**

■ WASHINGTON



BIDEN TO GET LATEST COVID VACCINE

US President Joe Biden on Tuesday will receive an updated Covid-19 vaccine while launching a new push to boost the number of Americans, especially seniors, getting the shots ahead of Thanksgiving and the coming winter.

White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Monday said about 12 million Americans are now getting the updated vaccine shots, a rise of nearly 60 per cent from the first weeks after they were rolled out last month. But more progress was needed.

"As the weather gets colder, Americans must take action to stay protected," the White House said. — **Reuters**

■ JOHANNESBURG



ETHIOPIA PEACE TALKS START IN SOUTH AFRICA

The first formal peace talks aimed at ending two years of war between the Ethiopian army and forces from the country's northern region of Tigray started in South Africa on Tuesday and will end on Sunday, the S African government said.

At stake is an opportunity to end a conflict that has killed thousands, displaced millions and left hundreds of thousands on the brink of famine in Africa's second most populous nation. The talks, mediated by the African Union, begin as the government has been making significant gains on the battlefield, capturing several large towns in Tigray. — **Reuters**



Britain's King Charles III greets newly appointed Conservative Party leader and incoming prime minister Rishi Sunak during an audience at Buckingham Palace in London. — **AFP**

Sunak pledges to lead UK out of economic crisis

LONDON: Rishi Sunak became Britain's third prime minister in two months on Tuesday and pledged to lead the country out of a profound economic crisis and rebuild trust in politics.

Sunak quickly reappointed Jeremy Hunt as his finance minister in a move designed to calm markets that had balked at his predecessor's debt-fuelled economic plans.

The former hedge fund boss said he would unite the country and was expected to name a cabinet drawn from all wings of the party to end infighting and abrupt policy changes that have horrified investors and alarmed international allies.

Speaking outside his official Downing Street residence, Sunak praised the ambition of his predecessor Liz Truss to reignite economic growth but acknowledged mistakes had been made.

"I have been elected as leader of my party and your prime minister, in part to fix them," said Sunak, who broke with the

tradition of standing beside his family and cheering political supporters.

"I understand, too, that I have work to do to restore trust, after all that has happened. All I can say is that I am not daunted. I know the high office I have accepted and I hope to live up to its demands."

Sunak said difficult decisions lay ahead as he looks to cut public spending. Hunt, who Truss appointed to calm markets roiled by her dash for growth, has been preparing a new budget alongside borrowing and growth forecasts due out on Monday.

The new prime minister also restored Dominic Raab to the post of deputy prime minister, a role he lost in Truss's 44 days in office.

With his new appointments, Sunak was seen to be drawing ministers from across the Conservative Party while leaving others in post - a move that should ease concerns that Sunak might appoint loyalists rather than try to unify the party.

Sunak, one of the richest men

in parliament, is expected to slash spending to plug an estimated £40 billion (\$45 billion) hole in the public finances created by an economic slowdown, higher borrowing costs and an energy support scheme.

He will now need to review all spending, including on politically sensitive areas such as health, education, defence, welfare and pensions. But with his party's popularity in freefall, he will face growing calls for an election if he ditches too many of the promises that the Conservatives win election in 2019.

Economists and investors have welcomed Sunak's appointment - Ryanair boss Michael O'Leary said the adults had taken charge again - but they warn he has few options to fix the country's finances when millions are battling a cost of living crunch.

Sunak, who ran the Treasury during the Covid-19 pandemic, promised to put economic stability and confidence at the heart of the agenda. — **AFP**

New Italian PM Meloni sees tough times, backs Ukraine

ROME: Giorgia Meloni, Italy's first woman prime minister, vowed on Tuesday to steer the country through some of the hardest times since World War Two and to maintain support for Ukraine in its conflict with Russia.

Striking a combative tone in her maiden speech to parliament, Meloni said her nationalist, right-wing coalition would make its voice heard in Europe and stressed her opposition to racism and discrimination.

Italy would continue to support Western sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin despite a squeeze on gas imports from Moscow, Meloni said during a wide-ranging speech that lasted more than an hour.

"Giving in to Putin's blackmail on energy would not solve the problem, it would exacerbate it by opening the way to further demands and blackmail," Meloni said.

The head of the nationalist Brothers of Italy, Meloni, 45, swept to victory last month as part of an electoral coalition that included Forza Italia, led by former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, and Matteo Salvini's anti-immigrant League. The government is Italy's most right-wing

administration since World War Two and former close ties between Moscow and both Berlusconi and Salvini have raised concerns over its foreign policy.

Meloni said her government would offer financial support for families and firms hit by the energy crisis, warning that the high cost of this meant her administration might have to delay some of its more costly election promises.

"The context in which the government will have to act is very complicated, perhaps the most difficult since World War Two," she said, adding that the economy could sink into recession next year as it battled rising inflation and disruption linked to the Covid-19 pandemic and Ukraine.

Meloni, who grew up in a working-class district of Rome, cast herself as an underdog who would defy negative forecasts about prospects for her government.

Meloni's party has neo-fascist roots but she told parliament that her government would fight any form of discrimination.

"I have never felt any sympathy or closeness to anti-democratic regimes. For no regimes, fascism included," she said. — **Reuters**



Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in her first address to parliament ahead of a confidence vote at Montecitorio palace in Rome. — **AFP**

Russia to take Ukraine 'dirty bomb' warning to UN

NEAR

FRONTLINE: Russia was expected to press its case at the UN Security Council on Tuesday that Ukraine is preparing to use a "dirty bomb" on its own territory, an assertion dismissed by Western and Ukrainian officials as a pretext for escalating the war.

Moscow sent a letter detailing the allegations to the United Nations late on Monday, and diplomats said Russia planned to raise the issue at a closed meeting with the Security Council on Tuesday.

"We will regard the use of the dirty bomb by the Kyiv regime as an act of nuclear terrorism," Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and the Security Council in the letter. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday repeated Russia's allegations and said the West was foolish to dismiss them.

They follow hints from Moscow that it might be forced to use a tactical nuclear weapon against Ukraine, whose president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, said the "dirty bomb" allegation showed Moscow was planning such an attack and seeking to blame Kyiv.



Firefighter Alexander from the de-mining squad of the Ukrainian emergency services searches through farm equipment at a farmyard which was the scene of a battle in September, in Kazacha Lopan, Ukraine. — **Reuters**

With Ukrainian forces advancing into Russian-occupied Kherson province, threatening a major defeat for Moscow, top Russian officials phoned their Western counterparts on Sunday and Monday to air their suspicions. Russia has

alleged that Kyiv has ordered two organisations to create a dirty bomb - an explosive device laced with radioactive material, without giving any evidence.

France, Britain and the United States said the allegations were "transparently false" and

Washington warned Russia there would be "severe consequences" for any nuclear use, while saying there were no signs of that yet.

Russia's defence ministry said the aim of a "dirty bomb" attack by Ukraine would be to blame Moscow for the resulting

US warns Moscow against any nuclear use as Berlin hosts 'Marshall Plan' rebuilding conference

radioactive contamination, which it said Russia had begun preparing for.

In an apparent response to Moscow's allegation, the UN nuclear watchdog said it was preparing to send inspectors to two unidentified Ukrainian sites at Kyiv's request, both already subject to its inspections.

Russia's state news agency RIA has identified what it said were the two sites involved — the Eastern Mineral Enrichment Plant in the central Dnipropetrovsk region and the Institute for Nuclear Research in Kyiv.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has not spoken publicly about the "dirty bomb" allegations but on Tuesday said the country needed to speed up decision-making in relation to what it calls its "special operation" to demilitarise Ukraine. — **Reuters**

Not sure what works best for your hair; diet or oil?



Dr Nisma Haris

The writer is a general physician and content creator

Your hairs are an undeniable element of your persona and who doesn't want to flaunt one?

As far as the vision goes when in a supermarket aisle, one finds stuck amidst countless hair care products and supplements claiming to make your hair super soft and shiny.

Among these products, hair oil is something that the human race has put their absolute faith in since time immemorial on account of hair growth and hair care. Not hesitating in the least to invest hefty in hair oils or other stuff. But is that all?

As per the study published in the National Library of Medicine, 'while such products contain a variety of nutrients, review of the

medical literature finds a notable lack of evidence supporting their use.'

Your hair health seems driven by a certain set of hair care essentials.

Nonetheless, it is the nutritional status of the body that is reflected in the hair as well as the skin. What your hairs require through diet to shine and bounce cannot be swapped with just applying oils.

Yes, oils do augment hair health but their role is secondary to dietary intake.

Sound hair health revolves around certain factors namely; age, genetic makeup, temperature or climatic conditions, drug therapy, and nutritional intake.

Except for diet, other factors

EXCEPT FOR DIET, OTHER FACTORS CANNOT BE ALTERED, HENCE THE DIET WE CONSUME TAKES A PIVOTAL LEAD IN SHAPING HAIR HEALTH

cannot be altered, hence the diet we consume takes a pivotal lead in shaping hair health. We fail to take into account these factors and keep shuttling between the hair oils and so the results are obvious.

Blame your current hair care kit

and head to make a new purchase.

Shifting our focus to the composition of hair, which is chiefly composed of protein known as 'keratin'; a diet rich in proteins, vitamins, and minerals plays a key role in the hair follicle growth cycle and sequences to healthy, voluminous, shiny and bouncy hair.

Here are some of the foods that are a must-have for healthy hair:

Eating eggs is more beneficial than applying them on your scalp. Likewise, fish sources like salmon and sardines are abundant source of omega-3 fatty acid which is known to maintain hair lustre and promotes growth.

Carrots are rich in Vitamin A and beta carotene which helps to

correct hair thinning. Spinach and other leafy greens are rich in iron and other minerals that protect against breakage and brittleness as well as keep the hair moisturised.

Following is citrus which is rich in vitamin C to help in the collagen formation of capillaries supplying hair shafts.

Next in the row is biotin which is found in whole grains and helps in cell proliferation.

Last but never least, your old friend 'water' whose role in keeping hair and skin hydrated to prevent dryness of hair cannot be underrated.

Now on don't be charmed by lofty commercials, rather align your focus to food as it verily works to foster hair health.

French chateaux brace for huge winter heating bills

MAXIME MAMET

Inside his French chateau on the riverbanks of the Loire, Xavier Leleve dreads to find out how much it will cost to heat the 12th-century building this winter.

Energy bills in France are expected to soar compared to last year, partly as a result of a hike in gas prices following the Russian war on Ukraine.

The prospect is particularly worrying owners and directors of large historical buildings dotted along the Loire.

Usually, Leleve pays \$14,800 to \$19,700 in heating, electricity and gas each winter to keep the Meung-sur-Loire castle up and running. But this year, "it'll be five to ten times more expensive.

You simply can't start spending that much on energy," he said.

It would divert funds from other projects, including the much-needed conservation of some parts of the listed building. In a wing of the castle closed off to the public, he pointed to the windows.

Some looked in bad shape, with duct tape covering some wooden frames and barely keeping out the outside cold.

Other windows were brand new, put in place after long discussions with the regional cultural authority on what they should look like to best respect the castle's original aesthetics.

"A window costs around euros €10,000 and we have 148 of them, so you can imagine how much the window budget is," said Leleve.

An hour's drive away down the river, Charles-Antoine de Vibraye has decided the best course of action to keep his huge family home heated this winter is to do nothing at all.

The Cheverny chateau, which inspired Captain Haddock's family estate in "The Adventures of Tintin", has belonged to the same family for six centuries, its website says.

Today some of the family still live in one wing of the stately home, but the rest of the building and its grounds include a restaurant and a Tintin exhibition, and are open to paying visitors.

De Vibraye says the business — one of the most visited Loire Valley castles — is successful enough for the family to be able to afford the extra cost of the 30,000 to 40,000 litres of heating oil needed each year.

He does not plan to increase the building's insulation either.

"If you trap in the heat, you just help the possible fungi and insects that will eat up your wood," he said. —AFP

Sunak's ascent is a breakthrough for diversity, with privilege attached



Isabella Kwai

The writer is a breaking news reporter in the London bureau, NYT



Megan Specia

The writer is a correspondent on the International Desk in London

In northwest London, home to one of Britain's largest Hindu communities, celebrations for Diwali, a festive holiday, were well underway on Monday.

Children tossed small fireworks that popped as they slammed into the sidewalk. Bright lights strung across the street twinkled overhead. Families bought sweets and candles.

But many who were gathered with their families said that they suddenly had something new to celebrate — the news that Rishi Sunak, the eldest son of a doctor and pharmacist of Indian descent, will become prime minister, the first person of color to hold Britain's highest political office.

Britain is home to a vibrant and diverse community of people with roots in India, which it ruled as a colony for nearly a century before India won independence in 1947.

As many as 1.5 million people of Indian descent live in England and Wales, making them the largest ethnic group after white Britons.

That makes Sunak's triumph a significant milestone for Britain's Indian diaspora, whose long struggle against racism and prejudice is rarely a prominent issue in British politics.

"We are so proud and happy," said Hemal Joshi, 43, who lives in northwest London with his wife and son.

"I've got so many messages from India already. So he has a lot of expectation now from all over the world. Let's see what he will do."

Sunak, 42, has always expressed pride in his Indian roots, and he regularly points to his upbringing as the son of immigrants.

But he has not put his heritage at the centre of his political message, focusing instead on his experience in finance, and the British news media has not dwelled on his ethnicity.

Instead, it is Sunak's elite education and extreme wealth that have drawn scrutiny — and become something of a political liability in a society famously divided by tensions over class.

Sunak is also a practicing Hindu, and when he took his oath of office as a member of Parliament, he did so on the Gita, a book of Hindu scripture.

As chancellor of the Exchequer, he



People walk past the Houses of Parliament in Westminster, London.

SUNAK, HAS ALWAYS EXPRESSED PRIDE IN HIS INDIAN ROOTS, AND HE REGULARLY POINTS TO HIS UPBRINGING AS THE SON OF IMMIGRANTS

celebrated Diwali, known as the festival of lights, by putting lights outside his official residence at 11 Downing St.

"We are very proud and very excited, being Hindus from India," said Priya Gohil, who was just leaving the temple with her family in the borough of Harrow after offering Diwali prayers. "It's just very relatable."

What was less relatable to many was the air of privilege attached to him.

Sunak attended the elite Winchester College, a private boarding school in Britain, then went to Oxford University and Stanford University.

He made a fortune in finance, working for Goldman Sachs and two hedge funds before his political career began. He is also married to Akshata Murty, the daughter of one of India's wealthiest men. Skepticism about his

wealth has followed him throughout his bid for the leadership of the Conservative Party, although many of his predecessors have also come from privileged backgrounds.

The issue remains resonant even after he emerged on Monday as the winner of the contest to lead the country.

"I think it's great that we have a person of colour as the prime minister for the first time," said Shivani Dasani, 22, who was leaving a temple in northwest London. But she added, "He's a rich, upper-class man, so he can't speak for the entire community in that way."

Those concerns persisted beyond London's Indian communities. In some neighbourhoods, many people were too busy finishing the workday to even know that Sunak had been chosen as prime minister. But those who did cited Sunak's sizable wealth as one of the only things they knew about him, even as they hoped he would address the problems of inflation and soaring housing prices.

"He won't know how normal people live — the working class," said Samuel Shan, who was sweeping the floor near his fruit and vegetable stall at a market in Dalston, a diverse neighbourhood that has become more gentrified in recent years. — *New York Times*

Retirement is another phase in life!

The period after retirement from work is supposed to be a wonderful time to spend quality time with family and pursue one's dreams which could not be fulfilled due to either work-related pressures or time constraints. Definitely, it is the time to do what makes one happy!

However, let me first say at the outset that the description "I am retired" should not be used as a label to introduce someone as it is not his or her identity.

A person's outlook on life influences how well he or she handles the transition from work to retirement!

For me, it is another phase in my life. I consider it as a transition from one phase to another! After all they are "golden years"! The more resilient one is, the better he is able to cope with challenges like retirement.

Time after retirement provides an opportunity to live a stress-free life as a person looks forward to a new period filled with choices to reinvent life to his or her own liking.

It is the time one bids farewell to the frenetic work pace and embraces the new journey.

There was no dearth of advice when retirement day finally arrived for me at the age of 60.

My doctors, family members, and many friends were concerned about life after my professional life.

The pieces of advice ranged from "It's time to relax as you have worked a lot" to "It's better you keep yourself fully occupied".

True, for those who have not cultivated any interest beyond their work, the transition becomes painful leading to stress and other health-related issues. So it is imperative that we develop varied interests as suggested by experts.

Keeping ourselves fully engaged not only makes us mentally agile



Samuel Kutty
@samkuttyvp

The writer is a senior journalist, author and columnist

THERE WAS NO DEARTH OF ADVICE WHEN RETIREMENT DAY FINALLY ARRIVED FOR ME AT THE AGE OF 60. MY DOCTORS, FAMILY MEMBERS, AND MANY FRIENDS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT LIFE AFTER MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE

but also improves our well-being! Research reveals that in addition to participating in engaging activities, certain lifestyle changes or adaptations can support cognitive health as we age as well, such as prioritising sleep, relationships and exercise. On the other hand, the failure to manage free time often can, as medical research suggests, lead to medical issues like depression, insomnia, emptiness, etc.

This is further compounded when we cannot fall back on the support system that we had at the workplace! Keeping us idle can often be like inviting our own death knell.

As we all know, an idle mind is the devil's workshop.

We should not ignore the fact that this phase of life can be a great opportunity and we should use it to enrich ourselves and expand to others.

There are so many things where we can engage ourselves.

We can plan our daily activities with a morning walk, yoga, cycling, or other exercises, in addition to many activities at home.

Being a grandparent, I try to spend time with my two grandkids in addition to my regular habit of reading and writing.

I love to see the two little angels coming home and spending time with them. From the general silliness to the extra source of love, this bond is special and unbreakable.

It's a relationship based on love, appreciation, fun, and pure joy.

We teach each other things.

The learning goes both ways!

Studies have consistently shown there are positive health benefits from time spent with grandchildren.

In addition to good old-fashioned fun and enjoyment, grandparents may gain an improvement in physical, mental, and emotional health!

RARE CELESTIAL SPECTACLE



People watch a partial solar eclipse in Ankara, Turkey, on Tuesday. – Reuters

‘Full circle’: Sunak’s roots a point of pride for Indians

SEAN GLEESON AND ARCHANA THIYAGARAJAN

Many Indians are delighting in the elevation of Rishi Sunak — with Punjabi roots — as British prime minister, in a milestone year for the subcontinental country's relationship with its former colonial ruler.

Sunak took charge on Tuesday as Britain's third premier this year with his Conservative Party floundering in the polls and daunting challenges ahead.

The 42-year-old was born and raised in Southampton, but his appointment as his country's first prime minister of colour has been cheered by Indians who still consider him a son of the soil.

"I am extremely happy," Krishna Kumar, an Indian IT worker, said in the capital New Delhi.

"Great Britain is a country which ruled India for more than 300 years — now a person of Indian origin is going to rule UK."

Sunak's parents were born into the Indian diaspora in east Africa, and trace their heritage back to pre-independence

Punjab in northern British India.

He is married to Indian-born Akshata Murty, whose father co-founded IT giant Infosys.

India celebrated 75 years since the end of British rule in August, just weeks before becoming the world's fifth-largest economy when its GDP overtook the United Kingdom's,

THE 42-YEAR-OLD WAS BORN AND RAISED IN SOUTHAMPTON, BUT HIS APPOINTMENT AS HIS COUNTRY'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER OF COLOUR HAS BEEN CHEERED BY INDIANS WHO STILL CONSIDER HIM A SON OF THE SOIL

according to IMF figures.

Colonial subjects would never have imagined such a "big development" as a man of Indian heritage taking charge of Britain, said Basavaraj Bommai, the chief minister of southern Karnataka state.

"The wheel of fortune has turned completely," he told reporters on Monday.

Sunak's ascent has been the subject of wall-to-wall television coverage in India, animating discussion during the usually lethargic Diwali holiday season.

"Indian son rises over the Empire — History comes full circle in Britain," read a news

banner splashed on broadcaster NDTV. Sunak takes charge of the UK as his Indian counterpart, Narendra Modi, is accelerating efforts to scrap symbolic vestiges of the colonial years

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) espouses nationalism that champions historical figures who opposed foreign domination and influence.

In September, Modi inaugurated a statue of Subhas Chandra Bose, an independence hero venerated for taking up arms against the British, but controversial for his collaboration with Nazi Germany's war machine.

The unveiling ceremony took

place just hours before Britain announced the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and the statue itself replaces one of Britain's King George V torn down nearly half a century ago.

The same month, Modi unveiled a new naval ensign that removed the prominent St George's cross — the national emblem of England — from the existing flag.

Modi congratulated Sunak on Monday and said he looked forward to the opportunity to "transform our historic ties into a modern partnership."

Sunak's first order of business with India will be to finalise a delayed free trade deal, a pact that

both countries had hoped to sign before Monday's Diwali festivities.

The agreement is important for Britain as it seeks alternative markets after leaving the European Union, but talks have reportedly snagged over fears among Conservatives that it would lead to an increase in immigration.

Sunak's appointment could be an added hindrance to the deal, said Harsh V Pant, a professor at King's College London's India Institute. "Being a person of Indian origin, he'd not like to be seen as being soft on India."

He will have to negotiate from a position of strength," Pant said.

His ability to push the deal over the objections of his party's rank and file would be an "important benchmark" for the success of his premiership, Pant added.

The new leader already faces the uphill task of uniting a party riven with divisions and infighting — and still reeling from the brief but calamitous tenure of his predecessor Liz Truss.

Despite Indians hailing Sunak's appointment as a historic moment for both countries, the political and economic instability he inherits has muted expectations for his tenure.

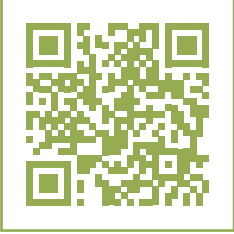
"This is the third prime minister in a year," Himanshu Singh, an engineer, said.

"So we don't know how many hours, or how many days or how many weeks he's going to be there."

— AFP



An artist gives finishing touches to a painting of Britain's new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to congratulate him, outside an art school in Mumbai, India, on Tuesday. – Reuters



RED
WARRIORS
DRAWN WITH
HOSTS IRAQ,
SAUDI AND
YEMEN

The trophy is pictured during the draw ceremony for the 25th Arabian Gulf Cup in Iraq's southern city of Basra. – AFP

Oman in strong group for 25th Arabian Gulf Cup



ANUROOP
ATHIPARAMBATH
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Two-time champions Oman were drawn in the Group A of the 25th Arabian Gulf Cup along with hosts Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

The draw for the prestigious Gulf event was held in southern Iraqi city of Basra on Tuesday.

The Group B included Asian champions and World Cup 2022 hosts Qatar, defending champions Bahrain, UAE and 10-time champions Kuwait.

The eight participating teams will compete for the title of the tournament that will take place from January 6 to 19, 2023.

The draw ceremony was attended by Qatar Football Association (QFA) President and Chairman of Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation (AGCFF) Shaikh Hamad bin Khalifa bin Ahmed al Thani, Iraqi Minister of Youth and Sports Adnan Dirjal, Governor of Basra Asaad Abdulameer Al Eidani, AGCFF Secretary-General Jassim al Rumaihi and other representatives of the participating nations.

The official mascot for the 25th edition of Gulf Cup, Sindbad, was also unveiled on the occasion.

Iraq will host the tournament for the second time in its history after the first in 1979, when it hosted the fifth edition in the

capital, Baghdad, at the Al Shaab International Stadium, and was crowned with its title.

The 24th edition, which was held in Qatar in 2019, was initially scheduled for Iraq but was shifted to Doha due to security reasons.

The Arab Gulf Cup Federation approved the international stadiums of Basra and Al Mina to hold the matches of the tournament from January 6 to 19, 2023.

BASRA READY

AGCFF Secretary-General Jassim al Rumaihi had earlier assessed the preparation for the much-followed tournament in Iraq. "Preparations in Iraq are in full swing to host the tournament, which will be a Gulf carnival. The Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation is confident of a successful tournament in Iraqi city of Basra," Al Rumaihi had said.

The Arab tournament was initially set to take place in December of this year but was pushed forward as Qatar World Cup came in the same period.

Instead, the tournament will kick off in January 2023 for the second time in Iraq since 1979.

Ahead of Iraq's return to hosting the tournament, AGCFF chief Shaikh Hamad al Thani travelled to Iraq to review the preparations.

The Arab Gulf Cup Football Federation had given the green

light for the tournament after the assessment of the stadiums and other facilities in Iraq.

Al Minaa Olympic Stadium is set to be the city's new 30,000-seater stadium, with two other venues hosting the regional as well. Basra International Stadium will invite 65,000 spectators, and a secondary stadium of 10,000 onlookers will be used for team training and friendlies.

From Oman, the draw was attended by Qutaiba bin Said al Ghailani, member of the Board of Directors of the Oman Football Association, Younis bin Issa al Ghafri from OFA Media Department, Maqbool bin Mohammad al Balushi, Director of the National Team and Salah bin Thuwaini al Araiimi from the National Teams Department.

The Arabian Gulf Cup was launched in 1970 and is organised every two years. The first edition was held in Bahrain in 1970 and the recent one in Qatar in 2019.

Kuwait is the most successful team in the tournament's history with ten titles, while Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Iraq won the event three times each. Oman and the UAE came on top in two editions each.

GROUPINGS

Group A: Oman, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Yemen

Group B: Qatar, Bahrain, UAE and Kuwait

Qatar hit by 'unprecedented campaign' over World Cup: Emir

DOHA: Qatar has been hit by an "unprecedented campaign" of criticism over the football World Cup, its ruler said on Tuesday, lashing out at "double standards" in a fierce rebuttal just weeks before the tournament starts.

The Gulf state has spent tens of billions of dollars on hosting the first World Cup on Arab soil, but has faced mounting attacks over its human rights record.

In a rare public airing of frustration, Shaikh Tamim bin Hamad al Thani said Qatar was the victim of "fabrications", hinting at hidden motives behind

the criticism. "Since we won the honour of hosting the World Cup, Qatar has been subjected to an unprecedented campaign that no host country has faced," he said in a speech to the country's legislative council, 26 days from the November 20 kick-off.

Fifa awarded the World Cup to an Arab country for the first time after a contentious bidding process in 2010. Qatar has since faced constant scrutiny over its treatment of foreign workers as well as LGBTQ and women's rights.

This week, the government angrily rejected a report by the



Country flags are seen along a street in Lusail, Qatar. – Reuters

Human Rights Watch group which said police have arbitrarily detained and abused members of the LGBTQ community ahead of the World Cup.

The emir said Qatar had initially accepted negative commentary "in good faith" and "even considered that some criticism was positive and useful, helping us to develop aspects that need to be developed."

"But it soon became clear to us that the campaign continues, expands and includes fabrications and double standards, until it reached an amount of ferocity that made many wonder, unfortunately,

about the real reasons and motives behind this campaign," he said.

The 29-day World Cup is expected to bring more than one million foreign fans to Qatar, a small, gas-rich peninsula of less than three million people.

The emir said the event was a chance for Qatar to show "who we are, not only in terms of the strength of our economy and institutions, but also in terms of our civilisational identity."

"This is a great test for a country the size of Qatar that impresses the whole world with what it has already achieved." — AFP

Oman U-19 team in fourth level at AFC draw today

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The draw ceremony for the 2023 Asian Youth Cup will take place on Wednesday in the Uzbek capital Tashkent.

The tournament witnesses the participation of 16 teams that qualified after an exciting qualifying campaign, the finals will be held from March 1 to 18.

The draw will divide the 16 participating teams into four groups, with each group including four teams, the top two teams from each group will qualify for the quarterfinals.

According to the draw system, the host Uzbekistan team came at the top of the rankings, the rest teams will consider the results of the last edition of the 2018 AFC U-19 Championship in Indonesia.

The first level in the classification includes, along with Uzbekistan, Saudi Arabia, the winner of the 2018 AFC U-19 Championship, and South Korea the runner-up, and Qatar, the winner of the 2014 edition.

The second level includes Japan, the 2016 champions, Tajikistan, Australia and Indonesia, which qualified for the quarterfinals in the 2018 edition.

The third level includes Jordan and China, who won the title four times before, and Iraq, in addition to Vietnam, who reached the semifinals in the 2016 edition.

Sultanate of Oman are in the fourth level, along with Iran, seeking to win the championship title for the first time in 47 years,



along with Syria and Kyrgyzstan, which return to the finals after an absence of 17 years.

It is noteworthy that the top four teams in the tournament

will get qualifying tickets for the Fifa U-20 World Cup 2023, which will be held in Indonesia from May 20 to June 11, 2023.

Oman national U-19

team played in the Group 7 qualifiers held in September in Salalah. The other teams in the group included Thailand, the Philippines and Afghanistan.

Oman team: Ayman al Nabhani, Salem al Abri, Nawaf al Futaisi, Saeed al Adawi, Salem al Shamakhi, Luqman al Jadidi, Osama al Rawahi, Osama al

Mahrouqi, Al Muntasir al Maawali, Jawad al Ezri, Salem al Abdali, Saeed al Ghanbosi, Mamoun al Araimi and Abdul Alim al Rawahi.

Challenges to sports investment discussed



ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The inaugural day of investment in sports cluster laboratory discussed the challenges that faced by the investors during the session on Monday which featured participants from different sectors including government entities, sporting activities and committees.

The laboratory is under organisation of Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth in coordination with Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit and the National Programme for Investment and Exports Development (Nazdahir). The laboratory began on Monday and will run for a period of four weeks until November 17.

It is expected that after the completion of the laboratory,

many of the projects and initiatives will be raised by the participants from different stakeholders to the top deciders for execution in the near future.

The laboratory highlights on three main pillars in sports investment including: sports investment projects, hosting of sporting events and sports tourism. These three sections will cover different sub-subjects including: laws and legislation, infrastructure and qualified human resources, funding sources, and seeking for the right investment opportunities and investors in this sector.

The laboratory aims for to agree on the general enablers in legislation and laws and to simplify the procedures for the investors to do proper investment in sporting field. This will lead for better defining the roles of the

authorities and drawing a road map to achieve the desired goals of the sector and Oman Vision 2040.

Basil bin Ahmed al Rowas, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth affirmed that Oman has a wide range of investment opportunities in sports cluster. "We are expecting from this laboratory to recommend potential projects and investment opportunities that may executed in the reality with top economic values," he said.

Many of new projects, initiatives and investment opportunities in the sports sector will come out by the end of laboratory. This will enhance its role in supplying the national economy through strategic directions and aligning the sector with legislation, laws, regulations and systems.

Stage set for exciting Gulf hockey fiesta

SPORTS REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The sixth edition of UTSC Gulf Hockey Fiesta 2022 is all set to enthrall hockey lovers and families on October 28 and 29 at Sultan Qaboos Stadium Complex in Bausher.

The official inauguration of the event is scheduled to be at 6 pm on October 28.

On the opening day, the matches start from 2 pm and continue until 11 pm.

On the second day, matches will begin from 2 pm and conclude at 9 pm.

"This year's event is extra-special for us as UTSC celebrating our 12th anniversary since its establishment and under the new logo which is launched recently by Padmasree Olympian Dhanraj Pillai," Javis Ahmed of UTSC said.

This event is under the patronage of the Oman Hockey Association, and it is an approved event of the Asian Hockey Federation.

The event will see 6 international and 6 local teams in action. Besides, there will be a tournament for boys and girls of Indian schools. Oman national women's team will play matches with Dubai Hockey Club as they are doing camp for the upcoming Hockey 5s World Cup, which will be hosted by Muscat in 2024.

This is a 6-a-side format game, with a maximum of 9 players in each team. Twelve teams will be participating in the tournament. These 12 teams will be divided to 4 pools.

Each pool winners will qualify to the quarterfinals. Teams



reaching second and third positions will play cross-over matches to book their berth in the quarterfinals.

Dr Marwan bin Juma al Juma, Chairman of Oman Hockey Association (OHA), said: "We are all set for a successful and a high-calibre international tournament. It is a world-class event. And we are proud it is happening in Oman. We are confident that this event will provide a platform for foreign players to exhibit their skills in hockey to the Omani sports loving public."

Lijihass Hussain of UTSC thanked the OHA chief for the support and guidance.

FAMILY ATTRACTION

The Gulf Hockey Fiesta 2022 will add a special attraction to draw in more audiences including families under the banner Gourmet Chef - Contest, organised by Foodland's Restaurants.

"We have a celebrity guests from South India, Sadhika Venugopal and Vaigha, both popular cine artist and event anchors. They will be hosting the cookery contest and entertainment programmes. In addition, we have live DJ, live music and, dances and family entertainment," Lijihass added.

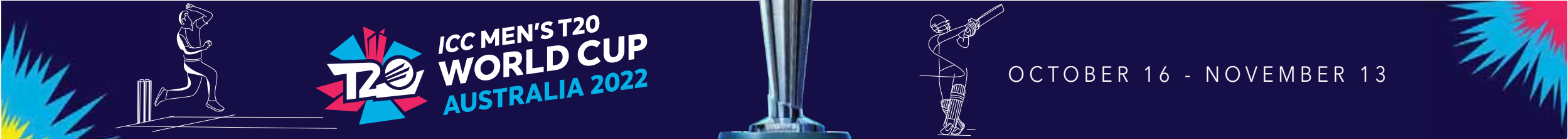
Sponsors for the tournament include Shahi Foods & Spices, Sea Pearls LLC, Muscat Overseas Group, FAP Oman, Al Nahla Solutions LLC, Badr Al Sama Group of Hospitals, Sea Pearls Gold & Diamond Jewellery, Lulu Hypermarkets, ALSaroorj Constructions, NFPC, and Lynx.

"UTSC team is excited to organise the sixth edition of Gulf Hockey Fiesta 2022 under the guidance of Oman Hockey Association. As Muscat is hosting first Hockey 5s World Cup in 2024, we are happy to have Oman women team as part of this event," Javis Ahmed said.

Hashir Ponmanichi, Jamsheer ACM, Vipin from Food lands, Abdulrahman al Balushi, Shakir Muneer (OHA) were also present during the press conference.

TEAMS

INTERNATIONAL TEAMS: - Naqi Strikers - Dammam (Saudi Arabia), Dada Bhai (Dubai), Scarlet Hockey Club (Dubai), Coorg Hoks (India), Dubai Hockey Club, UTSC, International
LOCAL TEAMS: - Ahli Sidab Sports Club, Seeb Sports Club, Al Bashayer Sports Club, Oman Veterans, Sohar Club, Team Coorg Muscat.
WOMEN'S TEAMS: - Oman Women blue, Oman women Red and Dubai Hockey club
SCHOOL TEAMS: - Indian School Al Maabala, Indian School Seeb and Indian School Wadi Kabir



Stoinis blitz propels Australia to crucial win

MARCUS STOINIS

 v 

RUNS

59*

BALLS

18

FOURS

4

SIXES

6

STRIKE RATE

327.78

ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP AUSTRALIA 2022



PERTH: Marcus Stoinis bludgeoned Australia's fastest T20 half-century on Tuesday as his side crushed Sri Lanka by seven wickets to secure their first win at the Twenty20 World Cup.

After being beaten by New Zealand in the opening match of the Super 12, Australia elected to field and restricted Sri Lanka to 157-6.

They had to make do without the services of leg-spinner Adam Zampa, who was ruled out at the 11th hour after testing positive for Covid-19.

The hosts replied with 158-3 in 16.3 overs, led by Stoinis who powerfully struck six sixes in his unbeaten 59 from 18 balls.

"It was good sloggng," man-of-the-match Stoinis told reporters.

"I was actually quite nervous to be honest. The intention was to go and put an impact on the game and probably provide a bit of energy for the boys."

The Perth Stadium deck could have been mistaken for a WACA pitch as Australia's seamers combined for three wickets with a barrage of pace and bounce which set Sri Lanka back.

Top-order batsmen Pathum Nissanka (40) and Dhananjaya de Silva (26) found boundary-scoring difficult but showed urgency running between the wickets.

An outstanding flick-back on the boundary by David Warner in the 11th over deprived de Silva of a six, and five balls later the batsman departed after lofting a catch to the same fielder at long-off.

Mitchell Marsh ran out Nissanka and triggered a mini-collapse, only arrested by a late onslaught from Charith Asalanka (38 not out off 25 balls) in the final overs. Fast bowler Lahiru Kumara made good use of the surface when Sri Lanka had their turn in the field, repeatedly beating Aaron Finch (31 not out) for pace.

It was off-spinner Maheesh Theekshana (1-23) who struck first though, inducing a false shot from Warner (11).

Innovative stroke play from Glenn Maxwell (23) injected impetus into Australia's response, but Stoinis delivered the knock-out blow as spinner Wanindu Hasaranga, the third-ranked T20 bowler, conceded 53 runs in three wicketless overs. — Reuters

Phil Simmons out as West Indies coach after WC exit

ST JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda: West Indies head coach Phil Simmons will leave his post after the upcoming Test series with Australia in the wake of the team's disastrous Twenty20 World Cup campaign, Cricket West Indies said on Monday.

A statement from CWI said Simmons would step down after overseeing the West Indies' two-Test series against Australia, which gets under way in Perth on November 30.

The announcement follows the West Indies' humiliating first round exit from the T20 World Cup, which was sealed after a nine-wicket thrashing by Ireland in Hobart on Friday. The team also suffered an embarrassing loss to Scotland.

In a statement released by the CWI, Simmons said that while the T20 debacle had been "disappointing and heart-wrenching", he had already been considering his position for "some time".

"This is not a knee-jerk reaction, but a move I have been considering for some time and now is the time to make public that I will step down as West Indies head coach at the end of the Test series against Australia,"

said Simmons.

"It is earlier than hoped for, but I will now focus my energies in Australia on continuing to build on the excellent progress the Test team has made," he added.

Simmons led the West Indies to victory in the 2016 T20 World Cup in India, and then returned as coach for a second stint in 2019.

CWI President Ricky Skerritt thanked Simmons for his contribution.

"Phil is a proud West Indian, with high ideals and has never lacked motivation in guiding our younger players on and off the field of play," Skerritt said.

"He brought valuable experience and stability at a very important period of transformation, including the most challenging environment of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We wish him all the best in his future endeavours."

Skerritt on Saturday vowed to carry out a "thorough post-mortem" on "all aspects" of the World Cup debacle.

"I am deeply disappointed with the performance results of our team in Australia and I appreciate the sense of utter frustration that is being experienced by many," Skerritt said. — AFP

A photograph of Phil Simmons, the former West Indies coach, wearing a blue and red West Indies coaching shirt with 'Sandals' written on it. He is wearing a white cap and holding a cricket ball in his right hand, looking towards the camera.

West Indies coach Phil Simmons during nets. — Reuters

business

MUSCAT
STOCK
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4,403.60

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Brent Crude \$92.12

Light Crude \$83.57

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Registration for OCCI board elections concludes tomorrow

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

The deadline for members of Oman Chamber of Commerce & Industry (OCCI) to register to vote in elections scheduled on November 22 is tomorrow, October 27, the Chamber stated on Tuesday.

The OCCI has adopted a new electoral system that aims to enhance the participation of all categories of the private sector in the national economic process, said Dr Saleh bin Said Masan, Commerce & Industry Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, who is also Head of the OCCI Elections Committee.

Dr Saleh said the Board of Directors of OCCI will comprise of 21 members, including five from the Governorate of Muscat, and five representing the heads of the chamber's 10 branches.

A further five will be members of the boards of public joint stock companies listed on the Muscat Stock Exchange, their members and



chief executives, while one member will represent the foreign investor community with a valid residency permit.

Under the new electoral system, members seeking to exercise their right to vote should have a Riyada card issued in their name, or have at least one Omani employee.

The total number of companies that have a voter membership card has so far reached 13,000, of which 61 per cent represent first and premium class firms.

They have at least one Omani employee. There has also been a strong turnout of women nominees for the positions on the chamber's board, he added.

Weatherford receives \$500 million PDO contract award to provide integrated drilling services

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Leading global energy services company Weatherford International plc announced on Monday, October 24, 2022, that it has received a five-year contract exceeding \$500 million from Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) to deliver Integrated Drilling Services in the Marmul and Greater Saqar fields.

Operations are targeted to begin in the fourth quarter of 2022. This award builds on ongoing collaborations with PDO, where Weatherford will deliver 700+ wells in the Marmul and Greater Saqar fields in the next years to come and further enhances commitment towards Oman's energy future.

Weatherford Integrated Drilling Services will combine a suite of technologies to deliver holistic and innovative solutions that maximise drilling efficiency in PDO's Marmul and Greater Saqar Fields.

This project is an integral part of Weatherford Oman's In Country Value strategy and also in line with Oman's Vision 2040



THIS PROJECT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF WEATHERFORD OMAN'S IN COUNTRY VALUE STRATEGY AND ALSO IN LINE WITH OMAN'S VISION 2040 TO DELIVER SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOR THE FUTURE.

to deliver safe and sustainable energy for the future.

Weatherford President and Chief Executive Officer Girish K Saligram commented, "Our Integrated Services offering is

gaining significant traction in the market. This award builds on our long and proven history of delivering technology leadership and innovation and is a testament to the competitiveness of our portfolio.

We are looking forward to further strengthening our relationship with PDO as we support their operations in this critical project. Our service quality, value proposition, and local content positioned

Weatherford as the clear partner of choice and will enable safe drilling operations that maximise efficiency while delivering value and reducing carbon emissions."

Operating in approximately 75 countries, Weatherford provides services globally via talent network of approximately 17,000 team members and approximately 350 operating locations, including manufacturing, research and development, service, and training facilities.

Oman opens up three new mining sites for investment

GROWING MOMENTUM: Local firms invited to bid for gabbro-rich sites in Ibra

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, OCT 25

Three mining concessions offered up for investment by Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals will be awarded within three months of the opening of the bids, the Ministry has pledged. The expeditious timeframe is a reflection of the Ministry's new business-friendly approach to the award of mining sites for investment.

As pre-approved sites, they come bundled with all of the prescribed permits and approvals secured in advance from the relevant government ministries and departments – a move designed to eliminate bureaucracy in the permitting process surrounding mining investment.

All three concessions, proven to have commercial quantities of aggregates for the construction and building materials sectors, are



located in the Wilayat of Ibra in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate.

Covering a total area of just over 2.5 sq kilometres, the three sites have been delineated from a larger mountainous area surveyed by the Ministry and found to be rich in gabbro rocks suitable for quarrying. Adjoining each other, the three sites – GS-000023-4,

GS-000023-7 and GS-000023-12 – are located about 17 kilometres from Ibra town, according to the Ministry.

However, unlike the Ministry's Licensing Round of Mineral Blocks announced earlier this year – which was open to both local and international investors – the latest public auction is restricted to

Omani mining firms with proven industry experience. The goal is to channel investment opportunities to smaller Omani players in the industry as well.

Interested parties have until December 4, 2022 to submit their bids for the sites on offer. Successful bidders will however receive only one site per company. A formal opening of the bid envelopes is scheduled at the Ministry on December 5, 2022.

Oman's mining and mineral processing sector – one of several thrust sectors identified by the Omani government as key to accelerating its economic diversification strategy – is gaining strong investment interest.

In April, the Ministry launched the Mining Bid Round 2022 offering a total of four blocks covering a total area of nearly 9,500 sq kilometres. Ideal for potash based mining, three of the blocks are located in the Umm a'Samim

desert adjacent to the Rub ' Al Khali desert (Empty Quarter). A fourth block, covering an area of 567 sq kilometres, is located in the Wilayat of Mahout in the eastern-central part of the country. Much of the investment in Oman's greenfield mining sector is currently being driven by Mineral Development Oman (MDO), the country's mining investment and development flagship. Part of Oman Investment Authority (OIA), MDO plans to – either independently or in partnership with local and international

investors – open up large swathes of the Sultanate of Oman for mining investment. Earlier this year, MDO signed agreements with the Ministry to secure mining concessions covering a total of 21,480 square kilometres of land. They include a number of potential minerals, mainly strategic minerals (metallic) such as copper, gold and chromium. The agreements cover eight sites mostly located in Al Batinah North and South, Al Dhahirah, Al Buraimi, Al Dakhiliyah and Al Sharqiyah North and South.

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.	: 2022-ENG-SOW-0053
Tender Title	: SA Telephony System Upgrade
Scope	: Upgrade the Cisco Call Manager system to the latest hardware and software version, which can be run for another 5 to 7 years under OEM support.
Document Issue Date	: 2 November 2022
Last Date For Applying	: 1 November 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>

ahlibank
launches easy
payment plan



MUSCAT: Expressing its intent to enhance customers’ purchasing power and cater to their ever-changing lifestyles, ahlibank has launched its easy payment plan for credit card holders offering with zero interest, flexible instalment options for a variety of merchant categories.

With instalment periods of 3, 6 and 12 months, and merchant categories comprising travel, furniture, electronics, jewellery and schooling, credit card holders can look forward to a host of easy deals on purchase transactions of RO 200 or above. EPP facility can be availed on purchases at merchant outlets and on Internet transactions.

While customers incur no additional fees on the three month plan, the charges for extended periods has been kept to minimal – RO 5 for 6 months and RO 10 for 12 months.

Under the travel category, the plan will be extended to travel agents, airlines, as well as hotels, making it a very lucrative option for customers with travel on their minds. The tuition fee category, on the other hand, will also include higher education, covering not only schools and colleges, but also universities, to offer respite for customers seeking easy financial solutions.

Commenting on the Bank’s EPP, Muneer al Balushi, AGM – Head of Retail Distribution at ahlibank, said, “Easy and convenient are the bywords of our payment plan, which is structured to enrich our customers’ purchasing power and to open up newer avenues for them to shop without worrying about immediate payments.

“As the fastest growing bank in the country, we believe the onus is on us to constantly upgrade and customise our products and services to meet and exceed the expectations of our customers. We have achieved that by incorporating flexible instalment options and promoting more categories in the merchant portfolio.”

Lulu launches ‘Kick offers’ campaign

MUSCAT: The football season is on and so is the excitement. As part of its efforts to delight customers and football fans alike, Lulu has launched the “Kick offers” promotional campaign to coincide with the upcoming World Cup to be held in Qatar in November 2022.

The campaign, which will be held from October 24, 2022 until the end of November 2022, was officially inaugurated by Ali al Habsi, the ever-popular former Omani goalkeeper. The promotion is a great opportunity to celebrate the excitement surrounding the event, which is being held in the region for the first time and take advantage of the discounts and offers on selected product categories during this period.

As part of the promotion, Lulu will be offering special discounts on products under categories such as electronics, IT products, mobiles, consumer electronics and accessories, home appliances, football clothing, footwear, luggage and furniture.

Lulu will also bring the best of the football season with aggressive discount schemes on electronic.

Customers can also be a part of the Scratch & Win event organised by Hiseense.

Additionally, there will also be special deals on food and



beverages, snacks, chips, biscuits, juices, soft drinks, quick meals, and ready-to-eat boxes throughout the promotional period.

To add to the excitement and fun, a whole lot in-store events have been planned and customers will get a chance to participate in various entertainment activities, such as goal kick challenge, ball heading challenge, and free style football dancing, and win amazing prizes.

Speaking about the event, Shabeer K A, Regional Director – Lulu Hypermarkets Oman, stated, “We are excited to organise the ‘Kick offers’ promotion, inspired by the flavour of the season. We are

sure that the promotion will no doubt provide a one-of-a-kind experience to our customers and generate unlimited excitement amongst the football fans. It is a matter of great pride for us to be a supporter of such a prestigious sport which is being held on the global stage in this region.

“The special offers, events, and activities are sure to create happy faces, enthusiasm and positive vibes among our customers. This is also an incredible opportunity to bring to life our brand values through such a platform.” The beauty behind such a promotion is about bringing people and communities together to celebrate this beautiful game

of football we all love, alongside a lively atmosphere of fun and entertaining activities.

“Through this promotion at Lulu, they have transformed the store into a one-stop destination where every football fan will be glad to shop and have fun! We hope the customers have a great time shopping at Lulu,” said Al Habsi after the inauguration.

An innovator of the retail industry, Lulu’s winning formula of great value-for-money shopping has been very well received by consumers. With over 29 stores and online shop, Lulu Hypermarkets have always remained a genuine symbol of quality retailing.

All-new
Subaru WRX
promises
adrenaline-
pumping
driving
experience



MUSCAT: Drawing on 30 years of championship rallying knowhow, the all-new Subaru WRX is promising customers significantly more bang for their buck with its sportier styling, agile performance, enhanced efficiency and industry-leading safety and connectivity features.

A performance four-door sedan inspired by rally cars, the redesigned WRX has been enthusiastically received by diehard Subaru buffs since its recent arrival in the Sultanate of Oman. The iconic brand has benefited from an array of exciting design and performance tweaks, including dramatically flared fenders, bold front grille and striking athletic posture – features that embellish the WRX’s proud rally heritage.

As with previous iterations of the WRX, the latest edition too delivers on its promise of a satisfying drive experience. Under the hood is the WRX’s pulsating heart – a 2.4-litre direct injected, turbocharged horizontally-opposed BOXER engine, delivering 275 horsepower at 5,600 rpm and broader torque curve with 350 Nm of torque from 2,000-5,200 rpm.

A quick-shifting 8-speed manual transmission gives you total control over your performance. Complementing this feature is the all-new Subaru Performance Transmission with Paddle Shifters, which combines manual fingertip paddle shifting and an 8-speed manual mode, offering a quicker and smarter response to driver input.

The all-new WRX is designed to maintain traction on all surfaces, performing at high speeds on straight roads and tight curves. Thanks to its acclaimed symmetrical All-Wheel Drive (AWD), power is distributed to all wheels for better traction on wet and slippery roads.

Within the cabin, an assortment of infotainment and safety features ensure that passengers ride in maximum comfort. It includes a striking new vertically-aligned 11.6-inch touch-screen, dual-zone automatic climate control, impressively supportive sports seats, automatic LED headlights and tail-lights, rain-sensing wipers and keyless entry/engine start.

OTE Group is the exclusive distributor of Subaru in Oman with sales and after sales outlets distributed throughout the country. Visit any Subaru outlet to check out the full line-up of WRX variants and colour options.

Fire, safety and security expo opens at OCEC

MUSCAT: The 6th edition of OFSEC — Oman’s only and most comprehensive exhibition on fire, safety and security — opened at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre. The event was inaugurated by HH Sayyid Azzan bin Kais al Said.

OFSEC 2022 brings together over 70+ exhibitors from over 10 countries who will showcase their avant-garde solutions, latest technologies, cutting edge innovations, cost-effective products and services to meet the requirements of governments, businesses, industrial and commercial entities, aviation, construction, infrastructure, transportation, manufacturing, oil and gas and utilities sectors.

OFSEC is designed to meet the needs of the local, regional and international markets by linking practitioners, suppliers, distributors and manufacturers from the fire, safety and security industry, with key decision makers from the government and private sectors making it a definitive networking platform, where new projects and partnerships are initiated and visionary objectives are implemented.

This event also aims to create synergy and strengthen the collaboration between the authorities and the industries.

The event lays the foundation to the current and future market trends in the fire, safety and



security sectors, for the industry professionals to communicate, share ideas, identify solutions, to operate effectively and efficiently and stay abreast with the latest global trends.

OFSEC confluences and strengthens local and international business engagement and encourages investment. The OFSEC Summit features an expansive line-up of 30+ stellar speakers, case studies, panel discussions, unique presentations providing access to a wealth of industry leading knowledge, sharing best practices and experiences, spotlighting trends, information

exchange, insights and outlooks with actionable takeaways.

The summit is the definitive meeting place facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogue with power packed networking opportunities among C-Level executives, leading industry experts, decision makers, policy makers and government officials from across the value chain to foster collaboration, discuss current challenges, business opportunities, develop market strategies, share knowledge and identify solutions aimed at shaping the future of fire, safety and security.

Neswa Savings Account from Meethaq meets
the aspirations of modern Omani woman

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman celebrates the Omani Women’s Day, which falls on October 17 every year, to highlight the important role of women in society and their achievements in various fields. On this occasion, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat showcased the Neswa Savings Account which is designed specifically for women to ensure greater ease of access to various financial services as well as to provide unique benefits suited for their needs.

On the occasion, Sami Arfah Bait Rashid (pictured), Assistant General Manager – Meethaq Personal Banking, expressed his happiness and pride in the achievements made by Omani women across various fields.

By working along with their male brethren, Omani women are contributing greatly to the economic progress and development of the Sultanate as it journeys on the path of its renewed renaissance.

He added that Meethaq offers unique products and services



aimed at enriching the lives of women from different sectors. Neswa account holders have access

to a wide range of features, which include a Visa Debit Card with an ATM withdrawal limit of RO 800, access to the largest network of ATMs and CDMs across Oman, complimentary Takaful life cover up to RO 10,000, coverage up to RO 1,000 for loss of wallet or handbag resulting in misuse of cards and coverage up to RO 100 for loss of ID cards and keys.

Account holders can also receive attractive indicative profit rates on their average monthly balance and are eligible for up to

50 per cent discount on the first year’s rental charge for safe deposit lockers.

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Politicians don't get the public view on migration



ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The writer is our foreign correspondent based in the UK.

New research by Ipsos for British Future, which has tracked public opinion on immigration issues since 2015, found that the public feels broadly positive about immigration. More people feel that immigration has had a positive effect on Britain (46 per cent) than a negative effect (29 per cent). That's a complete reversal of the findings when the survey was first conducted in February 2015.

Support for reducing immigration is at its lowest level since the tracker survey began. While four in ten people want immigration to be reduced, more would prefer it to stay at current levels or to increase.

More people would welcome increased migration to fill skills and labour gaps in particular areas, such as the NHS, social care and agriculture, than would like to reduce it.

While the British public has changed its mind significantly on immigration over the last seven years, they are largely unaware that this has happened.

Around half of the people are moderate "balancers" on the issue but believe — wrongly, as this study shows — that other people's attitudes are getting tougher and this may not have been widely noticed.

It may be because different people have changed their minds for different reasons.

For some who had been more sceptical about immigration, the EU referendum offered the catharsis of being able to talk about the issue, for others the reassurance that immigration, particularly from the EU, would be subject to UK government control.

At the same time, some people who were already positive about immigration became more supportive still, as an expression of post-referendum regret.

Many have said that greater awareness of the contribution made by migrants to Britain's

economy and public services — brought into sharper focus in media stories after Brexit and during the pandemic — made them feel more positive about immigration.

Much of the polarisation playing out in the political sphere looks at those arriving in small boats, not those moving for work and study. Yet the recently resigned Home Minister, Suella Braverman had put the prospects of cutting the economic and student migration agenda, including by casting doubt on the India-UK free trade agreement.

As the director of communication at British Future, Steve Ballinger says, there is ongoing concern over Channel crossings. But the government's response, deportations to Rwanda, is deeply divisive: around four in ten are supportive and a third opposed.

A majority of people agree, however, that it is unlikely to have the intended effect of reducing the number of people crossing the channel to seek asylum.

Understanding where public attitudes are is a useful corrective to negative caricatures of the British public in the political debate. People are more divided than they would like, but they have more common ground than they are led to believe.

Most people are not for total stoppage of immigration nor for open borders. Most are "balancers" on immigration and would support policies that reflect this moderate approach.

Liz Truss, who resigned as Prime Minister last week, her former chancellor and the health minister had all spoken of the need for more openness on immigration.

That would seem to put them at odds with Braverman, who had suggested that she would like to bring back the 'tens of thousands' net migration target.

One of the first acts of Boris Johnson, after becoming prime minister, was to ditch the target because he realised control was more important than numbers — that once voters knew the government could choose the immigration it wanted to keep, they would give permission for some increases in migration where the economy and society needed it.

The Home Minister and other voices can pursue an anti-immigration line if they wish, but they cannot claim to do so as current public opinion.

The Sustainable City - Yiti: Paving the way towards Oman Vision 2040



JOMAR MENDOZA
@JmObserver

Against a backdrop of heatwaves and droughts in certain parts of the world, and record rainfall and devastating floods in others, a one-billion-dollar development in Oman is literally building a better future, for the Sultanate of Oman, the Middle East, and the global population at large.

Upon completion in 2025, The Sustainable City - Yiti in Oman — a partnership between Diamond Developers and Oman Tourism Development Company (OMRAN Group) — will be the largest operational sustainable community in the world, while creating tangible environmental, economic and social benefits for the country.

In an interview with *Observer*, Ammar al Kharousi, Development Director, Yiti Tourism Development Company says: "As we can see over the world, climate change is having a dramatic impact on our everyday lives.

The time when adopting sustainable habits was a choice has come and gone, it is imperative we all play our part in tackling this major issue. At The Sustainable City - Yiti, we are doing just that and collaborating to drive environmental, social and economic benefits within Oman."

In line with the goals of the Oman Vision 2040, a wide-ranging blueprint for economic and social development over the next two decades, The Sustainable City - Yiti will not only contribute toward the country's climate change agenda, but also provide more employment, additional housing, boost the tourism industry and put Oman on the world stage when it comes to future industries and sustainability.

The In-Country Value of the project extends beyond the expected creation of 900 direct and indirect jobs, with the potential for local businesses and SMEs to reap the rewards of The Sustainable City - Yiti.

Using eco-friendly materials, the development, which is strategically located in the capital, Muscat, harbours real ambitions to be the first Net-Zero Carbon community in Oman by



The Sustainable City — Yiti will not only contribute toward the country's climate change agenda, but also provide more employment, additional housing, boost the tourism industry and put Oman on the world stage when it comes to future industries and sustainability.

AMMAR AL KHAROUSI

Development Director,
Yiti Tourism Development Company

2040. Built over one million square meters, it will include 1,657 residential units, and will comprise 300 villas and 1,225 apartments, as well as 132 luxury serviced apartments.

The city will play a significant role in avoiding carbon emissions across Oman by producing clean energy, adopting clean mobility solutions like autonomous shuttles and electric cars, and deploying EV charging stations around the project to accelerate EV adoption.

It aims to rely on renewable

energy — both solar and biogas — and achieve the highest waste diversion rates along with waste & water recycling. The recycled water will be used to irrigate a productive urban landscape, and the resulting vegetation will keep the city cooler.

By creating a live-work-thrive city, that is green, energy efficient, and people-centric, community residents will be encouraged to support a culture of sustainability through involvement in urban farming, community gardening, and separating waste at source.

Ammar al Kharousi added: "Essentially this is a city within a city, that is being built on a philosophy of social inclusion, with an emphasis on nature and wellbeing. The population will be diverse with mixed housing typologies to suit different needs, ages, and incomes."

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

At the award-winning Dubai development, home to over 2,700 residents, each house produces 25 to 30 kWh per day, 365 days per year; wastewater is 100 per cent recycled and reused for irrigation; each house produces hot water using solar water heaters on the roof; and the entire development is powered by 10 MW peak of photovoltaic modules covering 600,000 square feet of rooftops and carparks — drastically reducing electricity bills compared to conventional housing. Salah Habib, Chief Executive Officer at Diamond Developers said: "We learned many lessons from our inaugural project in Dubai, which has made a significant impact on

the quality of lives of residents living within the community. We have taken the best practices of that development, made additional improvements, and replicated them at The Sustainable City Yiti to ensure we reach our own targets and exceed all expectations across Oman."

Fundamentally, the city is aligning with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in 2015 by all UN member states, the shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include improving health and education, reducing inequality, and spur economic growth — with the overarching goal to tackle climate change.

"Tackling the climate crisis cannot be done alone, it's up to everyone, governments, businesses and members of the public to work together so we can all enjoy a better future."

The Sustainable City - Yiti also backs Oman's National Tourism Strategy (NTS), which was launched back in 2016 with the goal of increasing international arrivals to the country to 11.7 million visitors annually, up from 2.6 million arrivals in 2015. It also aims to boost the contribution tourism makes to Oman's GDP to more than 6 per cent.

Salah Habib concluded: "We are confident that this development will further enhance the tourism offering in Oman. With our particular support for eco-tourism, the project will feature a four-star neighbourhood hotel with 204 rooms, a five-star resort with 170 rooms and a range of restaurants, numerous leisure facilities, and beachfront access. The diverse needs of visitors are further catered for through the luxury serviced apartments for long stay visitors and residents."

MEDRC awards \$450,000 in funding for desalination solutions

BUSINESS REPORTER
MUSCAT, OCT 25

MEDRC has announced the recipients of 3 grants each amounting to \$150,000 under its USAID backed Pathway Research Grants in desalination. The funds are part of MEDRC's 5-year strategic programme launched in 2018 with a goal of driving innovation in small-scale desalination. The programme, known as the Oman Humanitarian Desalination Challenge has two

tracks of funding — Pathway Research Grants supported by USAID and a \$700,000 global Prize Competition, led by MEDRC and Oman's Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

Ciarán Ó Cuinn (pictured), MEDRC's Centre Director said: "Cheap accessible and environmentally sustainable small scale desalination is a humanitarian game-changer. We are proud to work with USAID to deliver new innovative approaches to get clean,



fresh water to off-grid, isolated and underdeveloped communities."

The first of the recipients, SolarDew, a Dutch company, has secured funding to research and

demonstrate a low-cost membrane distillation desalination process to provide families and off-grid communities with an independent and sustainable source of high-quality drinking water.

The system uses innovative manufacturing technologies from the packaging industry to create water purification bags directly integrating solar energy and water purification. This significantly reduces cost and complexity by eliminating electrical components, high pressure pumps and the

need for consumables. The system has the potential to double the production rate to 8 litres per square meter per day compared to existing solar stills.

The development of the 5th generation multi-layer full-size bags will finalise the design, tooling, production settings and quality control protocols before demonstrating a WaterStation that can produce 120 litre per day.

SolarDew's objective is to produce desalinated water for less than \$0.02 per litre and further

decrease costs as they scale up manufacturing.

Found Energy, a startup company in Cambridge, MA USA, has also secured funds for their early-stage research project. They are studying an innovative process using scrap aluminium-based fuel to extract energy by an oxidation reaction with water to power a desalination process. The chemical process produces clean hydrogen gas, heat, and an environmentally benign and valuable aluminium oxyhydroxide byproduct.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Announcement of Capital Reduction

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Intricacies of translating literary work

Creating a book is a whole process that not everyone can do successfully. Having the said book translated into another language is a totally different story. In an insightful event held recently, Jokha al Harthi and her Italian translator Giacomo Longhi talked with Oman literati to showcase the process... **P20**

A surgeon's struggle and trauma in a book

By Baraah Al-Mujaini

WHEN BREATH BECOMES AIR is an autobiographical non-fiction book by Paul Kalanithi. Paul was so immersed and intoxicated by neurosurgery. Although he has studied English literature and human biology at Stanford University, and completed his master's degree in the history and philosophy of science at Cambridge. Ultimately, he has trained as a neurosurgeon. At the time he was about to graduate, he was diagnosed with incurable stage-4 lung

cancer.

The book is divided into two chapters. The first deal with Paul's residency as a neurosurgeon when he was 35 years old while the second chapter narrates how he and his wife were dealing with his diagnosis and the idea of mortality.

Paul had to cope with his uncertain future, a future that is completely different from what he has always imagined being, as a physician. Throughout his book, he addresses the turmoil and traumas that doctors go through.

One of the main themes that was addressed by Paul is the controversy of hope and accepting the idea of certain-dead. It was a very emotional and complicated task for him to complete his training passionately, yet recognise the idea that he will not be able to do as a fully qualified neurosurgeon.

His symptoms started with backbone severe pain, and neglect it assuming that it was a consequence of his hard work and dedication. And his diagnosis was a complete shock for him, his wife, and the on-way baby. After the diagnosis of another tumour, Paul decided to spend the rest of his life writing and being around his family. He said he joined neurosurgery because he wanted to seek an answer to "what really matters in life".

The flow of the ideas and events, the way of writing and addressing the nuanced details, and describing what exactly happens in the head of doctors and how they really deal with their patients are incredibly written and well organised. The book celebrates the idea that we cannot always stick to our plans, sometimes should be changed and we have to cope with it. We never know when our death is we can approach how we want to behave before we end.

He died at the age of 37, in March 2015 and his book was published posthumously,

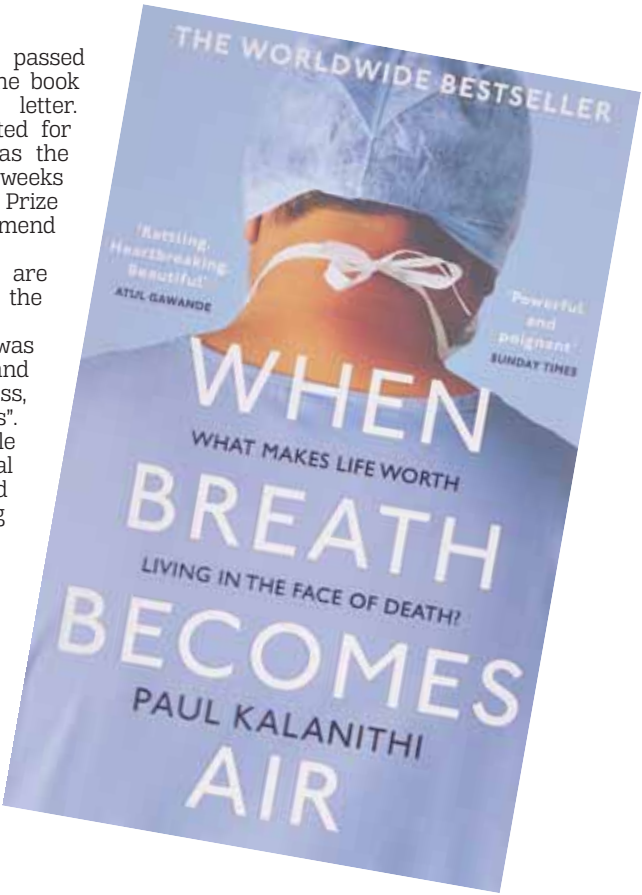
10 months after he passed away. His wife ended the book with a breaking-heart letter. The book was nominated for several awards and was the most-selling book for 51 weeks and was a 2017 Pulitzer Prize Finalist. I highly recommend reading this piece of art.

These quotations are from his wife's letter at the end of his book:

"His strength was defined by ambition and effort, but also by softness, the opposite of bitterness".

"We were inseparable as we had been as medical students when we would hold our hands during lectures".

"Even while terminally ill, Paul was fully alive; despite physical collapse, he remained vigorous, open, full of hope not for an unlikely cure but for days that were full of purpose and meaning".



READ

THE MAZE

BY NELSON DEMILLE

The eighth book in the John Corey series. When a former lover offers him a job, Corey comes out of forced retirement to track a serial killer.



MUSEUM

A woman checks one of Albert Einstein manuscripts on display in the Givat Ram Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The Israeli government decided on October 23, 2022 to allocate millions of dollars for a museum that will host the world's largest collection of Albert Einstein documents, the Hebrew University said. The new structure will be built on the university's Givat Ram campus in Jerusalem, with the government committing to approximately \$6 million and the university collecting another \$12 million. — AFP



FASHION

US fashion designer Vera Wang attends the DKMS Gala at Cipriani Wall Street in New York. DKMS is a non-profit organisation working to fight against blood disorders and blood cancer. — AFP





Slow-journeying in mountainous kingdom of Lesotho

IN THE REMOTE countryside of Lesotho, a kingdom in southern Africa, time stretches wide between long treks on horse or donkey back and hours of herding cattle along mountain ranges.

Mounted on his donkey, Matekoa Libe rides along the steep, rocky paths. His long legs slapping against his donkey's flanks as it lopes forwards.

"I'm going to the village (to get) gas," said the smiling 18-year-old as he stops to speak to AFP, holding a grey cooking gas cylinder placed next to him on the donkey's back.

He pulls a woollen hat over his head and hurriedly ties his shoelaces, and he sets off again, waving a coloured pompom at the end of a stick.

Then he descends from the heights of Thaba Bosigo, about 25 kilometres (15 miles) from the capital Maseru.

This is the cradle of the Sothos, the main ethnic group in the constitutional monarchy of 2.2 million people.

The sandstone plateau, which rises slightly over 1,800 metres, served as a refuge for Sotho pastoralists from the onslaught of European settlers and Zulu warriors from neighbouring South Africa



in the early 19th century.

Completely surrounded by South Africa, Lesotho is the largest of only three enclaved states in the world, far bigger than San Marino and the Vatican City, both of which are within Italy.

STRAW HATS AND BLANKETS

Lesotho is also one of the highest countries in the world, with more than 80 per cent of the country sitting 1,800 metres (5,900 feet) above sea level.

But in the Belgium-sized country, the most convenient and commonly used off-road transport are horses and donkeys.

Road infrastructure is still limited in Lesotho, one of the poorest countries in the world, with just three main roads linking Maseru to the rest of the country.

In the central highlands, nature remains untouched. Scattered in dotted lines, men draped in traditional blankets herd sheep and horned cows.

Motifs on the warm and bright woollen blankets are loaded with meaning, from celebrating life and nationality, to fertility and royalty, or peace, love and courage.

Sitting atop large rocks, shepherds sporting straw hats chew pieces of grass or smoke cannabis.

Lesotho pioneered the growing of cannabis for medical use on the continent more than two decades ago.

KINGDOM OF THE SKY

On weekends, men gather around litres of sorghum beer and accordions.

Famo, a kind of local hip-hop born almost a century ago from the poems of labourers working the South African mines, still rings out from the informal bars, known as shebeens and built from roofing sheets.

In the small kingdom, cacti and aloes grow to spectacular sizes.

But temperatures plummet below zero and snow falls during the southern winter. Lesotho hosts one of just two ski resorts in sub-Saharan Africa.

On the plains, women in dresses and wide-brimmed hats wheelbarrows across the fields carrying farm produce.

People here live on a shoestring, growing what they eat: spinach, maize, sor-



ghum and potatoes.

Unemployment is high in the former British protectorate, nicknamed the "kingdom of the sky", which became independent since 1966.

Under a thatched roof of her rondavel stone house, wife and mother Masikilo

Hlehli, 35, lives in a single room.

In the centre is a pot on a wood fire. There is no running water or electricity. Life in the villages stops at sunset.

"We are still underdeveloped. I graduated five years ago but I've not been employed ever since," she said. — **AFP**

TRAVEL TALES

Sheep take over Madrid's streets as they head for winter pastures



SHEEP REPLACED cars on the streets of Madrid on Sunday, as shepherds following ancient herding routes led their flocks through the centre of the Spanish capital to southerly pastures for winter grazing.

Locals and tourists lined the route and watched as thousands of sheep walked through the city, the bells around their necks providing a noisy soundtrack.



The annual event was revived in 1994 as part of Madrid's annual Fiesta de la Trashumancia, after the Spanish parliament recognised the traditional routes shepherds used to herd their livestock.

Just a few centuries ago, the route would have taken them through quiet countryside, but today it sees them traverse some of the busiest areas of the city, including the Plaza Mayor, Madrid's main square.



Onlookers took pictures and videos on their phones, while some children held out tentative hands to stroke the sheep.

Many people were surprised by the unexpected sight in a city usually thronged with traffic.

"It was crazy that there were so many sheep, I've never seen anything like it. It was a great way to learn about Spanish history and Spanish culture," English teacher Maria Kouriabal, a 22-year-old American who has been living in Madrid for a month, said. — **Reuters**



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DISCOVERY

Webb Telescope Captures New View of 'Pillars of Creation'

YES, IT'S FULL OF STARS, and stars to be. Twenty-seven years ago, in 1995, the Hubble Space Telescope wowed the world with a cosmic landscape called Pillars of Creation. The image revealed towering mountains of gas and dust in the Eagle Nebula, one of the most productive star factories in the Milky Way galaxy. It was high art from deep space and a visual triumph for the newly repaired and reborn Hubble, which had been marred by a blurred lens that prevented it from recording clearer scenes of the cosmos.

Now, the James Webb Space Telescope, Hubble's successor, has turned its infrared eyes to see through those same columns and inspect the

newborns still in their dusty cribs. In the new view of the Pillars, released on Wednesday, cherry-red streaks and waves are jets of material squeezed from globs of gas and dust — baby protostars — as they collapsed and heated up towards stardom.

After 20 years and about \$10 billion, the Webb telescope launched on Christmas Day into an orbit around the sun and 1 million miles from Earth. The launch was stupendously successful, as was the complex unfolding procedure in space that put the telescope into operational mode.

The Webb is designed to see infrared light, electromagnetic radiation with wavelengths longer than visible



light — colours no human eye has ever seen. Viewing the cosmos in these wavelengths allows astronomers to see distant galaxies whose light has shifted into infrared with their motion away from Earth, and to peer through dust clouds that litter the lanes of interstellar space.

The telescope has proved its worth. In the past few months, it has dazzled astronomers with new views of a universe that they thought they knew: galaxies and stars at the edge of time, only a few hundred million years after the Big Bang; spooky pictures of planets such as Neptune and Jupiter; delicate probes of the atmospheres of exoplanets that are possible lairs of alien life-forms; a view of detritus from a small asteroid just after the NASA DART spacecraft, practicing planetary defence, intentionally smashed into it; and cosmic landscapes such as the Pillars of Creation or the cosmic cliffs of the Carina Nebula, emphasising the immense scale and fragile drama of

the cycles of creation and destruction that characterise the seasons of existence in our galaxy.

The Eagle Nebula is about 6,500 light-years from Earth and is in the constellation Serpens, from the Latin word for "serpent." The nebula, known also as Messier 16, is starlight that can be barely glimpsed by the naked eye on clear evenings in July and August.

Enjoy it while you can: In a few million years, the nebula will be gone, evaporated by its fierce stellar progeny like a fleecy windblown cirrus cloud on a summer afternoon.

The new image was made with Webb's Near Infrared Camera, or NIRCam. Astronomers said in a news release that the telescope's observation would allow a better census of the nebula's stars and their types, and thus improve their models and theories of how stars form, escape from their dusty crèches, die and pass on their substances to the future. Dust to dust, ashes to ashes. — **NYT**



MOVIES

'Black Adam' rocks to top of N America box office

NEW FILM "Black Adam" blew away all competition this weekend, leading the North American box office with an estimated take of \$67 million, industry watcher Exhibitor Relations reported Sunday. A superhero origin story spun off from 2019's "Shazam," "Black Adam" stars Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as the titular villain, a former slave endowed with miraculous powers by ancient Egyptian gods.

"As a spinoff, this is a strong opening," David A. Gross of Franchise Entertainment Research said, adding that it was a "positive and steady step forward for DC Comics," the generator of many superhero films.

In a distant second was another new release, Universal's "Ticket to Paradise," at \$16.3 million for the Friday-through-Sunday period. Released earlier abroad, it has already taken in \$80 million outside North America.

"This is a very good domestic

ENTERTAINMENT

Balenciaga breaks ties with Kanye West

PARIS-BASED FASHION house Balenciaga has ended ties with rapper Kanye West following a recent run of controversial statements, including an outburst denounced as anti-Semitic, according to fashion news site WWD.

"Balenciaga has no longer any relationship nor any plans for future projects related to this artist," Balenciaga's parent company Kering told WWD.

It follows weeks of particularly erratic behaviour from West — now known as Ye.

He made a surprise appearance earlier this month for his brand Yeezy at Paris Fashion Week, sporting the controversial slogan "White Lives Matter", widely considered a racist response to the Black Lives Matter movement.



opening for a romantic comedy," Gross said. It stars two of Hollywood's biggest stars, George Clooney and Julia Roberts, as a bickering, divorced couple who fly to Hawaii to try to sabotage their daughter's wedding.

With Halloween approaching, the next two films were both horror specials. Paramount's "Smile" dropped one spot from last weekend to third, taking in \$8.4 million. Sosie Bacon plays a therapist whose grasp on reality is shaken by a horrifying event. Next was Universal's blood-soaked "Halloween Ends," which dropped sharply from last weekend's box-office-topping \$41.3 million to just \$8 million. — **AFP**



The 45-year-old artist then lashed out on social media against former colleagues and friends and a leading fashion journalist who criticised the move, including Kering boss Bernard Arnault.

West had already broken off his partnership with Gap last month, with both sides saying they were no longer pulling in the same direction.

Adidas announced earlier this month that it was putting its own tie-up with Kanye "under review".

Balenciaga and Kering did not respond to requests for comment from AFP.

Ye appeared as a model in Balenciaga's most recent Paris show last month, wearing a military-style outfit in a mud pit. Images of him from the show were no longer visible on the Balenciaga website on Thursday. — **AFP**



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Directors' Report

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are pleased to present to you the financial results of the Company for the nine-month period ended September 30, 2022.

We made good progress on our planned growth priorities, across our Retail, SME and Corporate segments through continued expansion in our branch network and organic growth giving us a good position to support our clients, colleagues and communities.

We are dedicating an increasing share of expenditure on technology to drive operating productivity and improve customer experience and remain on track to achieve our targets for 2022. This has further strengthened our confidence in delivering a favorable return on tangible equity over the medium term.

With a well-diversified geographical presence across Oman (21 branches), coupled with a broad product profile, your Company is well positioned to provide innovative and financial solutions for both Retail and SME. Your Company was awarded the Best Non-Banking Financial Corporation (NBFC) at the Oman Banking and Finance Awards. This serves as a testament of our continuous efforts and our leadership position in the industry.

National Finance continues to adopt a prudent approach to credit approvals keeping in view the overall macroeconomic scenario and perceived increase in credit risk. Within this policy, our approach has been to target customers who satisfy our credit risk appetite. We anticipate a reasonable growth to our asset base in the medium term.

The total regulatory capital of RO 115.01 million is the highest among Finance and Leasing Companies (FLCs) which gives us a strong base on which to build our business. Your Company remains the largest finance and leasing Company in the Sultanate in terms of asset size, branch network, revenues and profit.

The operating profit (profit before provision and tax) was at RO 11.90 million (RO 10.57 million in September 2021) while Net Investment in Lease was at RO 424.04 million (RO 406.31 million in December 2021). Profit after tax was RO 6.81 million as compared to RO 5.73 million in September 2021.

The company is fully compliant with the provisioning norms prescribed by the Central Bank of Oman and the International Financial Reporting Standards. We have added to our credit reserves through additional overlay over the IFRS9 requirement in order to be prepared for future challenges given the incremental risk in the portfolio due to COVID-19 pandemic.

The company remains committed to Omanisation and as of September 30, 2022, the number of Omani employees was 283 out of the total workforce of 313. The Omanisation percentage works out to 90.42% which is higher than the given target of 80%. Your Company continues to provide career growth and development of Omani nationals through ongoing training programs in line with their job requirement. We will continue to maintain momentum on employee engagement initiatives, development of future skills, managerial and leadership capabilities for their professional development.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the regulators and all stakeholders for the support extended towards the growth of the Company. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we also thank the management and staff for their dedication and hard work which has enabled us to establish ourselves as the most trusted company in the sector.

Taya Jandal Ali
Chairman

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests the company in either Arabic or English with 7 days of receipt of the request. The full set of financials are available in the website of Muscat Stock Exchange.

UNAUDITED CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE

	Nine months ended 30 September 2022 RO '000	Nine months ended 30 September 2021 RO '000
Income		
Income from financing activities	31,973	30,621
Finance costs	(13,252)	(12,681)
Net finance income	18,721	17,940
Other operating income	2,117	1,770
	20,838	19,710
Expenses		
Operating expenses	(8,264)	(8,397)
Depreciation	(434)	(495)
Amortization	(246)	(250)
Net impairment loss on lease receivables	(3,987)	(3,461)
Bad debts written back	108	155
Total expenses	(12,823)	(12,448)
Profit before tax	8,015	7,262
Income tax expense	(1,202)	(1,536)
Profit after tax	6,813	5,726
Other comprehensive income		
Items that will be classified to profit or loss		
Movement in revaluation reserve – net of tax	6	7
Change in fair value of cash flow hedge	1,547	3
Other comprehensive income	1,553	10
Total comprehensive income	8,366	5,736
Basic and diluted earnings per share (RO)	0.011	0.009

UNAUDITED CONDENSED INTERIM STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT

	30 September 2022 RO '000	30 September 2021 RO '000	31 December 2021 RO '000
ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5,012	2,872	5,579
Net investment in finance leases	354,111	349,199	350,158
Working capital and factoring receivables	69,932	57,331	56,154
Interest rate derivatives – cash flow hedges	974	-	-
Advances, prepayments and other receivables	3,725	3,129	3,201
Assets held for sale	1,500	1,500	1,500
Goodwill	5,950	5,950	5,950
Intangible assets	709	898	904
Property and equipment	6,601	6,817	6,720
Statutory deposit	250	250	250
Total assets	448,764	427,946	430,416
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY			
LIABILITIES			
Creditors and accruals	8,874	9,146	9,327
Tax liabilities	1,941	2,075	3,476
Bank borrowings	285,656	273,896	272,919
Fixed deposits	36,162	32,242	31,269
Deferred tax liabilities	533	328	533
End of service benefits	589	573	588
Total liabilities	333,755	318,260	318,112
EQUITY			
Capital and reserves			
Share capital	54,123	54,123	54,123
Share premium	5,786	5,786	5,786
Revaluation reserve	1,025	1,033	1,031
Foreign currency reserve	4,321	4,321	4,321
Voluntary reserve	3,000	3,000	3,000
Cash flow hedge reserve	974	(295)	(573)
Legal reserve	9,363	8,501	9,363
Retained earnings	18,217	15,148	17,184
Total shareholders' equity attributable to the equity holders of the company	96,809	91,617	94,235
Perpetual bonds	18,200	18,069	18,069
Total equity	115,009	109,686	112,304
Total liabilities and equity	448,764	427,946	430,416
Net assets per share (RO)	0.179	0.169	0.174

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Local Scene

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Intricacies of translating literary work

By Kabeer Yousuf
@kabeeryousef

Translating a literary piece from one language to another is often cumbersome for a myriad of factors that matter in the process. The most important being keeping the charm of the scenario, the power of dialogues and the flow of events notwithstanding the translator's ideas being inserted, obstructing the smooth sailing of the whole story.

It is all about respecting the author's feelings while writing the original piece and doing justice to it and thus a translator, many times, is in a dilemma of fetching the true meaning, the original essence of the secondary work and making it more appealing to the readers.

Oman's celebrated author Jokha al Harthi's work of 'Celestial Bodies' is currently in a voyage of translations and the latest being Italian whose work was carried out by Giacomo Longhi, an Italian translator who is known to reword from Persian and Arabic to Italian for the passion for literature.

Jokha is an Omani writer and academic and was educated in Oman and the United Kingdom. She obtained her PhD in classical Arabic literature from Edinburgh University and is currently an

associate professor in the Arabic department at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU). Her work of 'Celestial Bodies' has won the Man Booker International Prize in 2019.

Jokha al Harthi is the first female Omani writer to have won the Man Booker World Prize and the one who marked a great milestone for Arabic literature in general and Omani literature in particular. Her original work in Arabic was translated by Marilyn Booth, a professor from the United States.

The story of Celestial Bodies depicts the life of three sisters in the village of Al Awafi in Oman. While the eldest one Mayya marries after a heartbreak, Asma, her younger sister, marries from a sense of duty and Khawla, the youngest one who has emigrated to Canada chooses to refuse all offers and awaits a reunion with the man she loved.

It is the story of these three women and their families, their feelings, love and losses, which is beautifully narrated in the backdrop of the scenic beauty of one of Oman's villages.

Jokha is the first Omani author to be published in Italian and the event which is part of the Italian Cultural Week events was celebrated by Bait Al Zubair and the Italian Embassy. Ahmed al

Maini conducted the talk with several topics, including the challenges of translation into Italian, the Italian audience's reception of the novel, the presence of Arabic literature in Italy, the similarities and differences that affected the novel through its various translations, and the author's relationship with the translators of her books.

The session was followed by a signing ceremony in Arabic and

