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MONDAY, 12 JULY 2021
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King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia received His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik at Neom Palace on Sunday

HM gets warm Saudi welcome

Neom, Saudi Arabia - The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia received His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik at Neom Palace on Sunday.

Upon His Majesty the Sultan's arrival at Neom Palace, King Salman led the welcoming party. The two leaders exchanged cordial talk and reviewed the strong relations binding the sultanate and the kingdom in light of their joint visions.

Earlier in the day, His Majesty the Sultan arrived in Neom city. Upon his arrival at Neom Bay Airport, His Majesty was received by Prince Mohammed bin Salman al Saud, Crown Prince, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

His Majesty the Sultan was

HM, King Salman exchange orders

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik conferred the Al Said Order, considered the highest order of Oman, on King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud, while the Saudi monarch conferred on His Majesty the Sultan the Order of King Abdulaziz, the highest Saudi order of merit granted to monarchs and heads of state.

accorded an official welcome ceremony. When the Royal aircraft entered the airspace of Saudi Arabia, it was escorted by warplanes from the Saudi Air Defence Force.

Crown Prince Mohammed

bin Salman, who led the welcoming party, greeted His Majesty the Sultan at the aircraft ladder, along with Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud al Saud, Minister of Interior and Head of the Mission of Honour.

Prince Mohammed bin Salman accompanied His Majesty the Sultan to the dais, flanked by two columns of the Guard of Honour. The Omani Royal Anthem and the Saudi National Anthem were played to the accompaniment of a 21-gun salute, while military aircraft flew over the airport quarter, in salutation to His Majesty the Sultan.

After that, His Majesty the Sultan headed to the Royal Hall, where coffee was served in the presence of the Saudi Crown Prince and top officials and dignitaries.

Continued on Page 02

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HM, King Salman hold official talks

Neom - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia held a round of official talks at Neom Palace on Sunday.

At the outset of the talks, the Saudi King expressed his warm welcome to His Majesty the Sultan and commended the solid foundation of bilateral relations and the strong ties between the two countries. King Salman lauded the progress made in all spheres, noting that this visit will give impetus to bilateral cooperation and joint coordination.

On turn, His Majesty the Sultan affirmed that Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, is progressing with firm confidence and shaping a brighter future. His Majesty the Sultan pointed out that relations between the sultanate and Saudi Arabia are based on strong bonds of history and affinity. Various aspects of bilateral cooperation continue to gain ground, which opens wider horizons to realise the aspirations of

HM the Sultan pointed out that relations between the sultanate and Saudi Arabia are based on strong bonds of history and affinity

Omani and Saudi peoples, His Majesty the Sultan said.

The two leaders expressed their satisfaction with joint coordinations and understanding on issues of common concern, notably recent regional and international developments.

The session of talks was attended from the Omani side by Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of the Diwan of Royal Court, Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Nu'amani, Minister of Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, and Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister.



Prince Mohammed bin Salman al Saud, Saudi Crown Prince, receives His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on his arrival at Neom Bay Airport on Sunday

His Majesty gets warm Saudi welcome



H M the Sultan and King Salman at the presentation ceremony of the highest orders of their countries in Neom

Continued from Page 01

Meanwhile, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman welcomed the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan.

This was followed by His Majesty the Sultan, accompanied

by the Saudi Crown Prince, joining a motorcade which took them to Neom Palace, escorted by motorbikes from Royal Protocols. When the motorcade arrived, cavalry lined both sides of the road in a warm welcome to His Majesty the Sultan.

The meeting was attended from the Omani side by members of the official delegation accompanying His Majesty the Sultan, including Sayyid Shihab bin Tarik al Said, Deputy Prime Minister for Defence Affairs, Sayyid Khalid bin Hilal al Busaidi, Minister of the

Diwan of Royal Court, Gen Sultan bin Mohammed al Nu'amani, Minister of Royal Office, Sayyid Hamoud bin Faisal al Busaidi, Minister of Interior, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, Said bin Hamoud al Ma'awali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, Abdulsalam bin Mohammed al Murshidi, Chairman of Oman Investment Authority, and Sayyid Faisal bin Turki al Said, the sultanate's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

It was attended from the Saudi side by Prince Mohammed bin Salman al Saud, Prince Abdulaziz bin Saud al Saud, Prince Faisal bin Farhan al Saud, Foreign Minister, Dr Musaad bin Mohammed Al Aiban, Minister of State and member of the Council of Ministers, and Dr Majid bin Abdullah al Qasabi, Minister of Commerce.

ONA



Sayyid Badr and Prince Faisal bin Farhan sign an MoU to set up Omani-Saudi Coordination Council

Omani-Saudi Coordination Council established with MoU

Neom - Within the context of the state visit of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Omani and Saudi governments signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to set up an Omani-Saudi Coordination Council, in the presence of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud and His Majesty the Sultan.

The MoU was signed by

Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, and his Saudi counterpart, Prince Faisal bin Farhan al Saud.

The signing of the MoU stems from the directives of the two countries' leaders for consultation and coordination between the two sides on matters of common concern. It is also aimed at enhancing and expanding cooperation between the sultanate and Saudi Arabia, which are expected to sign more agreements and memoranda to serve their joint interest.

The two countries hope that the coordination council will promote existing cooperation and joint projects with a view to achieving full integration in various spheres.

The ceremony was attended by senior officials from the Saudi and Omani sides.

ONA

new

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Part-time employment offered to GED students

Our Correspondent Muscat

H E Dr Mahad bin Said bin Ali Ba'owain, Minister of Labour, issued a decision (No. 115/2021) regarding part-time work, under which the General Education Diploma (GED) students too stand to benefit.

The decision states that employers may employ jobseekers, retirees, the GED or higher education students, or workers in the private sector under the part-time work system.

The decision stated that the temporary-work employee must be an Omani over the age of 15 years, and that a work contract



(Photo for illustrative purpose)

should be concluded between the two parties, showing the work relationship, the agreed salary and the working hours; the contract should be less than a full contract.

The decision said the GED students in order to benefit from this system, must be registered in one

of the public or private schools and be at least 15 years old.

The students must obtain consent of the guardian in order to work, and should work only during the mid-year vacation and at the end of the school year leave. The decision was issued on July 6.

World Population Day focuses on impact of COVID-19 on women

Our Correspondent Muscat

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been on various sectors, but the most silent one could be in the health sector in which women are said to be the worst victims.

The UNFPA executive director Dr Natalia Kanem said that women were not being able to exercise their reproductive rights and choices following disruptions in healthcare services, apart from gender discrimination that prevents them from making decisions on accessing healthcare.

"For some, it (pandemic) has led to postponing childbearing. For others, disruptions in healthcare have led to unintended pregnancies," Dr Natalia said in her message on World Population Day, which is observed on July 11 every year.

"Although we are yet to get a full picture of the impact of COVID-19 on fertility, these trends have provoked alarmist concerns about baby booms or busts," she said.

"What should cause alarm is when women cannot exercise their reproductive rights and choices - whether



(Photo for illustrative purpose)

because healthcare services are interrupted, or because gender discrimination prevents them from making decisions about accessing healthcare."

Dr Natalia said what leads to healthy and productive societies is when women can make informed choices about their reproductive health, and when they have access to services to support their choices.

"A woman - who has control over her body gains not only in terms of autonomy, but also through advances in health and education, income and safety - is

more likely to thrive, and so is her family," she said.

But unfortunately, Dr Natalia said the pandemic has laid bare stark inequalities and weaknesses in healthcare systems within and among countries.

"The crisis has caused many overstretched healthcare systems to scale back reproductive healthcare services, which are often not deemed essential.

"While these services are a human right, they have been shunted aside in favour of more 'pressing' concerns. Amid economic pressures and budget

cuts, there is a real risk that some countries may fail to restore these services," she added.

On World Population Day, Dr Natalia called for action to close all gaps, because reproductive health services are essential. "Even if healthcare systems are understandably strained, these services cannot wait. Any further delays will curtail the health and well-being of women and girls, consequences that can last a lifetime," she said.

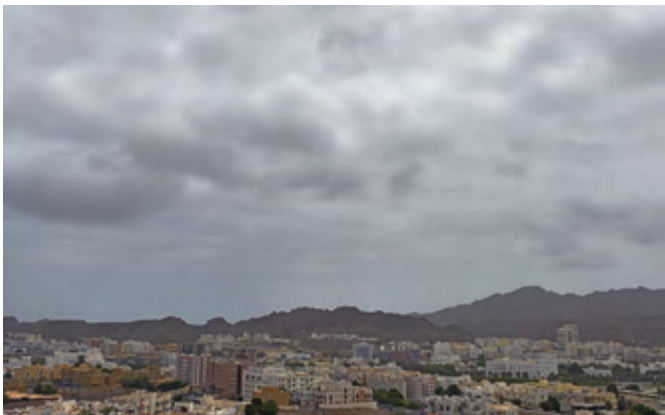
"Let us work together to uphold the right to decide when and if to have a family," she added.

Eid al Adha holiday from July 18

Muscat - As per the Royal orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, it has been decided that Eid al Adha holiday for employees of the departments of the state administrative apparatus, other legal entities and private sector establishments will be from Sunday, 8 Dhul Hijjah 1442 AH, corresponding to July 18 till July 22.

Work will resume on Sunday, July 25. The decision allows employers and employees to agree on work arrangements to compensate this holiday.

ONA



Temperatures to drop

Our Correspondent Muscat

The low pressure in the Arabian Sea is the reason for a mild weather change in the sultanate, the meteorological department said, noting that there would be isolated rains in some parts of the country mainly in the Dhofar region on Monday.

Muscat will remain free of any showers except scattered clouds in and around the capital.

Due to the clouds and rains, overall temperature is predicted to drop by 3 to 4 degrees.

"Mild rains will be there in the northern parts, especially in the Dhofar region and the Al Hajar mountains," an official from the Met department said.

Tender Notice

The Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI), announces following E-Tenders for 2021

Tender Number	Tender Name	Deadline for Specifications Request	Deadline for tender bids	Tender Price
15/2021	WAN Optimization Solution	29 July 2021	12 August 2021	75 OMR

Interested companies registered with Tender Board may obtain Tender document from the E.Tendering website: <http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>. Tenders should be submitted online on given website. The Tenderer should enclose scanned copy of bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of (2%) of the Tender value validity for (120) days from the deadline for the tender bids and addressed to the Public Authority for Social Insurance. And original document of the same should be submitted later directly to the Administration Department - Purchase and General Services Section / Third Floor, PASI Head Office in Bawshar.

CORRESPONDANCE:

1. Tender inquiry : All correspondence pertaining to the TENDER Inquiry must be online at E-Tendering system (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>)
2. E-Tendering system inquiry: All correspondence pertaining to the e-tendering system technical support must be directed to the following helpdesk email address and phone number: Tel : +968 24166670 , E-mail : etenderhd@ita.gov.om

PASI is not obliged to accept the lowest or any other tender that may be received

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With summer holidays on and outdoor activities restricted, what options do children need to stay engaged?

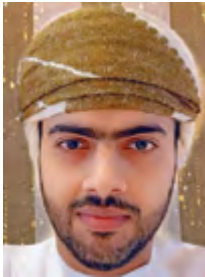
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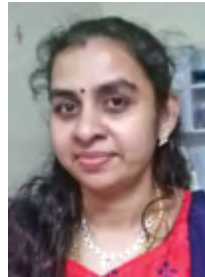
Faris al Jabri Consultant mechanical engineer

Involving children in virtual communication is vital in these times of social distancing and for the future. 'Finger Tips' is a virtual workshop for kids sponsored by British Petroleum and operated by the Children's Public Library in Muscat. Presenting appropriate video content that is smartly produced for the Internet will help keep kids engaged.



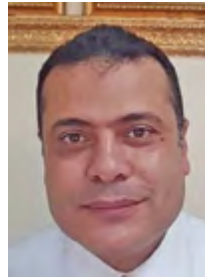
Ahila Jeyakumar Homemaker

Children should be encouraged to read books. Engaging them in meditation, yoga, gardening and other indoor leisure activities will keep their brain healthy and reduce stress during the pandemic.



Dr Eitantawi Gabr Moustafa Doctor

Children have many choices, such as participating in sports and music. We must give children the freedom to choose the activity they like. There are skills that a child can learn, such as cooking.



Hammoud al Wahaibi Hockey coach

Parents should find recreational alternatives for their children during the night closure, such as cultural competitions that push them to search for the right information. They can also choose intellectually stimulating electronic games.



M D Moniruzzaman Teacher

Parents have to spend more time with their children. Activities like reading, yoga, cooking, learning a new language, creating a scrapbook, gardening, etc can keep children engaged during summer holidays. Parents should take the opportunity for family bonding.



Mohan Anandan Banking sector employee

Challenging times, indeed, for parents! Children must be kept occupied with quality TED educational programmes, encouraged to fine-tune their speaking skills and motivated to write on interesting topics to enhance their imagination and writing skills. Have family time watching movies together, besides making them part of the cooking session.



Harish Danani Senior manager

Do yoga, start a home garden, learn a musical instrument, engage in puzzles and wordplay, play board games, bake a cake, cupcakes or cookies, etc. Children can also be encouraged to learn three new words every day to expand their vocabulary.



Jay Prakash Private sector employee

Multiple options are available. Children should be allowed to choose any new language they want to learn, which will be a useful soft skill in the long run, or practise yoga which will help build flexibility and immunity.



Ruskeen S Sales manager

Parents should create a cordial atmosphere at home and engage children in light household activities, including gardening. Parents can introduce good books and encourage children to read at leisure for pleasure.



? NEXT ON YOUR SAY

Eid under lockdown: How do you feel about being at home during the holidays?

The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by *Muscat Daily*. If you feel strongly about the issues discussed here, you can email your comments to muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om Log on to our Facebook page or tweet us your comments on the issue

ELECTRONIC TENDERS

The Internal Tenders Committee of the Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation announced the following tenders:

Tender No.	Tender Name	Company that are entitled to participate	Tender Price	Last Date for purchasing Tender	The deadline for submission of tenders
1/2021 Recall (1)	Providing cleaning services to Ibri Vocational College	Specialized in providing Same service and registered with the Tender Board with Grade: Excellent , First Second, Third, Fourth	25 /= RO	21/07/2021	31/07/2021
03/2021 Recall (1)	Providing cleaning services to Saham Vocational College	Specialized in providing Same service and registered with the Tender Board with Grade: Excellent , First Second, Third, Fourth	25 /= RO	21/07/2021	31/07/2021

The purchasing of the tender documents by E-Tendering system will starting on Monday 12/07 /2021 at 07:30 am. To purchasing, please visit the following link:

<https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om/>

All companies that are bidding must provide a bank guarantee or a certified cheque from a bank operating in the Sultanate for at least (1%) of the tender value on behalf of His Excellency Dr. / Chairman of the Internal Tender Committee.

Preference will be given to companies' or small and medium enterprises registered with the General Authority for the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) that includes the largest proportion of its tender Omanization. **Ministry is not bound to accept the lowest or any other tender.**

Chairman of tender committee
Ministry of Higher Education Research & Innovation

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Offer valid from 16th May 2021 to 15th August 2021. Total of 3 raffle draws will be held at Oasis Water Company, Asaba, Dhow Dees: 16th June 2021, 19th July 2021 and 15th August 2021. Winners will be intimated directly. Oasis Water Company employees are not eligible to participate in this promotion. Gifts shown are for illustrative purpose only. Actual may vary.

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72 companies fined for violating COVID-19 norms

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Seventy-two business establishments found violating Supreme Committee's decisions have been penalised, according to the Government Communication Centre.

A statement issued by the centre said, 'The concerned authorities recorded 72 violations against establishments that vio-

lated the decisions of the Supreme Committee tasked with tackling the developments resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic during the period from June 20 to July 7.

'The authorities have warned that the decision to reduce entry to complexes, shops, restaurants and cafes to 50 per cent of capacity is still in effect and that violating these decisions will lead to strict action and penalties.'

COVID-19 cases drop further

Muscat - The Ministry of Health (MoH) on Sunday reported 3,217 new COVID-19 cases and 52 deaths over the past three days - a less week-end count compared to the previous one.

The total number of cases registered in the sultanate has now reached 284,905, including 3,423 deaths.

MoH said 137 patients

were admitted to hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of inpatients to 1,391 including 501 in intensive care units. Also, the number of active cases is decreasing as recoveries go up.

'The total number of recoveries is 257,689 while the recovery rate is 90.4 per cent,' MoH said.

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AND OTHER PRIZES

Bank credit growth slows to 2.1% in May; deposits rise

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Bank credit growth in Oman decelerated to 2.1 per cent in May 2021 from a 3.0 per cent year-on-year growth recorded in April this year, according to data released by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) on Sunday.

Total outstanding credit extended by the sultanate's banking sector grew 2.1 per cent on year-on-year basis to RO27.1bn at the end of May 2021, the CBO said in its monthly statistical bulletin.

Bank credit to the private sector, however, demonstrated a moderate decline of 0.1 per cent at RO23.1bn, for the first time since the beginning of the year, the data showed.



(Muscat Daily)

Non-financial corporate sector received the highest share (over 46.5 per cent) of total private sector credit, followed by household sector which accounted for 45.3 per cent share at end-May 2021. The share of financial corporations stood at 4.8

per cent and other sectors received the remaining 3.4 per cent of total private sector credit as at end-May 2021.

Conventional banks recorded a weak credit growth of just 0.4 per cent in total outstanding bank credit in Oman. Islamic

banking industry, by contrast, provided total financing of RO4.5bn at the end of May 2021, recording a robust growth of 11.3 per cent over that a year ago.

Total assets of Islamic banks and windows rose by 13.1 per cent on a year-on-year basis to RO5.6bn and constituted about 15.7 per cent of the banking system's assets in May.

On the other hand, total bank deposits in Oman grew by 4.2 per cent year-on-year to hit RO25.1bn at the end of May 2021. Total private sector deposits increased by 7.4 per cent to RO17.3bn, the central bank data showed.

Total deposits held with the Islamic banks and windows surged by 21.6 per cent to RO4.1bn.

Middle East's asset management industry grows 11% to \$1.2tn

Muscat - The disruptive nature of the COVID-19 health crisis has been unrelenting, with repercussions implicating all societal areas. Yet despite the unprecedented turbulence caused by the pandemic, the asset management industry in the Middle East has emerged in a favorable position, according to a new report released by Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

The report, titled 'Global Asset Management 2021: The \$100 Trillion Machine,' illustrated that the Middle East's as-

sets under management (AUM) have witnessed double-digit growth in recent times, increasing by 11 per cent from US\$1.1tn in 2019 to US\$1.2tn in 2020.

"Much like every sector, the resilience of the asset management industry was tested in 2020, with initial outbreak disruption and subsequent economic tailwinds presenting a period of sizeable uncertainty for the industry and its incumbents," said Harold Haddad, managing director and partner at BCG.

"However, the Middle East

has prevailed in the face of adversity, and it is now apparent that the region has entered 2021 in a position of strength following healthy returns," he added.

As per the report's findings, the AUM growth in the region is primarily attributed to an increase in sovereign wealth funds' (SWF) assets, mostly due to strong capital market performances. Many SWFs had high equity exposure in developing and emerging markets, faring well as financial landscape regained a degree of pre-pandemic stability.

CMA presents draft sukuk and bonds regulation for public consultation

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Capital Market Authority (CMA) has invited all public joint stock companies, audit firms, law firms, investors, academicians, interested persons and the general public to provide their comments, observations and inputs on the draft sukuk and bonds regulation which is posted on the CMA's website.

In a press statement, the CMA said that the draft regulation is a response to the rapid legislative developments in the sultanate's capital market since the issuance of the Commercial Companies Law in 2019 and the



(Muscat Daily)

Regulation for Public Joint Stock Companies early this year to enhance readiness of the legislating regime to cope with the global economic developments

and changes.

The draft sukuk and bonds regulation, as per the CMA, will help to standardise the rules of sukuk and bonds market and

improve the efficiency of such debt instruments to contribute to the national economy.

The draft regulation aims to regulate the issuance of bonds and sukuk by adding a set of detailed clauses.

The clauses are prepared by a specialised work team constituted by the CMA for more resilience to ease the processes of issuance of bonds and Sukuk as financing instruments.

The CMA applies the public consultation approach to obtain the input of the stakeholders of the industry. Responses to the draft regulation will be received on email oep@cma.gov.om for three weeks starting from July 7, 2021.

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MUSCAT DAILY

TENDERS ADVERTISEMENT

Oman Electricity Transmission Company (OETC) Announce the following Tenders:

Sr.No	Tender No.	Tender Name	Last Date for Obtaining Tender Documents	Closing Date	Grade	Tender Document's Fees (Including VAT) (RO)
1	39/2021	Stocktaking for OETC Stores in Muscat, Misfah and Salalah for the Year of 2021	02/08/2021	24/08/2021	Local companies with experience in same field, Have a valid tender board registration certificate.	39.375
2	40/2021	Reinforcement of Tower Foundation for 132 KV OHL Tower at Sharqiyah & Dakhiliyah Governorates	02/08/2021	24/08/2021	Local companies with experience in same field, Have a valid tender board registration certificate.	157.500

Participation:	Interested Companies may obtain Tender Document with the necessity of sending a valid Tender Board certificate in the same required field.
Buying the Tender:	The documents required for the purchase of the tender are sent by e-mail to the Tenders, Procurement and Contracts Department, to ensure the authenticity of the documents before purchasing the tender through the official working days of the hour from 8.00 am - 01.00 pm .
Fees:	Against non-refundable payment as mentioned above against each set of document.(Payment Through Bank Transfer)
The deadline for clarification:	Before (21) Days from closing date.
Submission:	Each bid should be submitted in a separate sealed envelope addressed to The Chairman of tender committee mentioning Tender Number and Name on the top of the envelope.
Terms and conditions:	- No other writing or any reference thereto should be mentioned on the envelope. - The bid should be valid for not less than (90) days from closing date. - The Tenderer should enclose a bank guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the bid value and should be valid for (90) days from closing date, addressed to Oman Electricity Transmission Company (SAOC). - Any bid not comply with the required guarantee, will not be accepted. - OETC is not bound to accept the lowest or any other offers.
Offer:	The complete bid documents should be deposited in Tender Box No. (1) at the company's building before 11:00 am on the assigned date for submission of the Tenders.
Company Address:	Muscat - Al Mawaleh Road No: 2153 - Building No. 423 O Block No: 321 - Contact Details: 92217856 , 93201558
Email Website:	tenders@omangrid.com www.omangrid.com



Oman Electricity Transmission Company S.A.O.C.
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تعلن الشركة العُمانية لنقل الكهرباء عن طرح المناقصات التالية :

م	رقم المناقصة	عنوان المناقصة	آخر موعد للحصول على مستندات المناقصة	آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات	الدرجة	لمن الوثيقة (شامل ضريبة القيمة المضافة) (د.ع)
١	٢٠٢١/٣٩	المجرد السنوي لخازن الشركة العُمانية لنقل الكهرباء في مسقط والمسفاة وصلالة لعام ٢٠٢١م.	٢٠٢١/٠٨/٠٢	٢٠٢١/٠٨/٢٤	الشركات المحلية العاملة في هذا المجال المسجلة لدى مجلس المناقصات وتسجيلها ساري المفعول	٣٩/٣٧٥
٢	٢٠٢١/٤٠	تدعيم قواعد الابراج الهوائية جهيد ١٣٢ ك.ف في محافظات الشرقية والداخلية.	٢٠٢١/٠٨/٠٢	٢٠٢١/٠٨/٢٤	الشركات المحلية العاملة في هذا المجال المسجلة لدى مجلس المناقصات وتسجيلها ساري المفعول	١٥٧/٥٠٠

الاشتراك	يمكن للشركات والمؤسسات المتخصصة الحصول على مستندات المناقصة مع ضرورة ارسال شهادة مجلس المناقصات سارية المفعول وفي نفس المجال المطلوب.
طريقة الاشتراء	يتم إرسال المستندات المطلوبة لشرء المناقصة عن طريق البريد الإلكتروني الى دائرة المناقصات والمشتريات والعقود . وذلك للفائدة من صحة المستندات قبل شراء المناقصة وذلك من خلال أيام العمل الرسمية من الساعة ٨:٠٠ ص - ١:٠٠ م .
الرسوم	مقابل دفع المبلغ المحدد أعلاه للنسخة الواحدة - لا ترد . (الدفع عن طريق التحويل البنكي)
آخر موعد للإستفسارات	قبل (٢١) يوم من تاريخ آخر موعد لتقديم العطاءات
تقديم العروض	تقدم العروض في مظاريء مغلقة ومعنونة بإسم رئيس لجنة المناقصات مع تحديد رقم وعنوان المناقصة فقط.
الشروط و الضمانات	- عدم تحديد اسم صاحب العطاء أو ما يشير إليه على المحقوف. - أن تكون العروض سارية المفعول لمدة لا تقل عن (٩٠) يوما من تاريخ تقديم العطاء. - إرفاق تأمينا في صورة ضمان مصرفي من أحد البنوك العاملة في البلاد قدره (٢١) من قيمة العطاء ساري لمدة (٩٠) يوما من تاريخ تقديم العطاء . ومعنونا بإسم الشركة العُمانية لنقل الكهرباء . - كل عطاء لا يستوفي التامين المطلوب لن ينظر فيه . - الشركة العُمانية لنقل الكهرباء غير مقيدة بقبول أقل العروض أو أي عطاء آخر .
العرض المقدم	يجب وضع العروض في صندوق المناقصات رقم (١) بمبنى الشركة قبل الساعة ١١ صباحاً من التاريخ المحدد لتقديم العطاءات .
عنوان الشركة	عنوان الشركة: محافظة مسقط - الموالح رقم السكة ٢١٥٣ - مبنى رقم ٤٢٣ - تفاصيل التواصل - ٩٢٢١٥٥٨ , ٩٢٢١٧٨٥١
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Winners and losers from global tax reform

Paris, France – G20 finance ministers on Saturday gave their backing to a historic deal to overhaul the way multinational companies are taxed, and urged hold-out countries to get on board.

Some 132 countries have already signed up to a framework for international tax reform, including a minimum corporate rate of 15 per cent, struck earlier this month. But the endorsement by the 19 biggest economies plus the European Union will help ensure it becomes a reality following years of negotiations.

The world's top economies would be the biggest gainers of the OECD-brokered preliminary deal, while tax havens would be the biggest losers.

Big countries to win

The United States, Germany, France, etc..., the world's biggest countries are where multinationals do most of their business but are less and less likely to have their tax homes.

These countries stand to benefit from a measure that would redistribute part of the corporate taxes raised to nations where multinationals actually make their profits.

The imposition of a minimum rate of 15 per cent (with fewer possibilities to lower it) would also increase the amount of tax money to be distributed.

According to the OECD, which led negotiations that produced a draft tax reform agreement among 131 nations, setting a minimum effective tax rate of 15 per cent would generate an extra US\$150bn in revenue per year.

Many nations have rates higher than 15 per cent on paper, but with so many exemptions that companies end paying much less. Most of these exemptions would be closed, so companies would end up having to pay at least 15 per cent.

The CAE, a body charged with providing economic analysis for the French government, has calculated that Paris would likely get an extra six billion euros in tax revenue per year. Germany would likely receive 8.3bn euros and the United States nearly 15bn.

China would also likely benefit as it is expected to be able to continue to provide certain tax incentives to support business development.

The details on what tax incen-



A protester holds a banner in Venice, on Saturday, to protest against the G20 meeting between finance ministers and central bankers (AFP)

tives might remain have yet to be finalised, however.

Tax havens to lose

Countries that set their tax rates low in order to lure businesses, including tax havens that charge little to no tax, stand to lose the most.

While Barbados and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines have balked at the deal, other tax havens like Panama, Bermuda and the British Virgin Islands have nonetheless signed up.

"They've realised that they don't have the capacity to block an international deal and calcu-

lated that it's in their interest to be cooperative," said Nicolas Veron, an economist at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington and the Bruegel Institute in Brussels.

"Countries which attracted shell companies for years will suffer from the reform and will

have to find other development strategies," forecast Farid Toubal, a specialist on the subject at Paris Dauphine University.

Worried European countries

European countries like Ireland, which lured Apple and Google with the possibility of lowering effective tax rates to practically nothing, would see a windfall of revenue if they join the reform.

But that is only if these companies stay and continue to book their profits there.

Countries like the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Switzerland are in a similar boat.

"Beyond the impact on public finances, it's clear that the reform process could affect these countries' economies and employment, particularly if multinationals relocate profits and investments as a result," said economist Ricardo Amaro at Oxford Economics.

In 2018, around a third of the profits of US multinationals were booked in the Netherlands, Ireland and Luxembourg, although these countries only accounted for five percent of their sales, Amaro noted. But Ireland, which has invested heavily in recent years in IT infrastructure and education, and become a centre for the pharmaceutical industry, would likely keep many multinationals even if it raised rates.

"Certainly the shell companies will leave, but the production base will stay as Ireland has other advantages, they speak English, it is part of the immense European market, etc.," said Paris Dauphine University's Toubal.

Exemptions for emerging nations Non-governmental groups that analyse tax optimisation strategies used by multinationals, like Oxfam, have criticised the OECD-brokered deal for letting rich countries keep most of the additional tax revenue.

"The world's poorest countries will recover less than three per cent – despite being home to over a third of the world's population," Oxfam International's executive director Gabriela Bucher said in a statement.

But the draft deal that emerged at the beginning of July does contain some sweeteners for emerging nations.

They will benefit from the measures that redistribute some tax revenues to countries where profits are generated.

AFP

G20 nervous over Delta variant threat to economic recovery

Paris, France – As healthcare systems brace for damage inflicted by the quick-spreading Delta variant, G20 finance ministers have warned that it could also slow global economic recovery.

"The recovery is characterised by great divergences across and within countries," and "remains exposed to downside risks, in particular the spread of new variants of the Covid-19 virus", they said in a final statement.

The ministers also warned of the dangers of the 'different paces of vaccination' around the world.

The main concern is the Delta variant, which first appeared in India and is spreading rapidly, causing outbreaks in Asia and Africa, and driving up case numbers in Europe and the United States.

"We have very good economic forecasts for all the G20 countries," French Economy Minister Bruno Le Maire said.

But he warned: "The only thing that could threaten a solid and rapid rebound of the econ-



US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen speaks during a press conference during the G20 finance ministers meeting in Venice, on Sunday (AFP)

omy is the variant, and a new wave of the pandemic.

"We must improve vaccination, everywhere in the world."

Britain's Rishi Sunak was more defiant, telling AFP in an interview that the UK had showed "vaccines are effective at preventing hospitalisations and deaths, even with the Delta variant."

"I think that gives us the confidence to move forward and slowly and safely reopen our economies and countries," he said.

'Support still needed'

Many countries, however, from Spain to Thailand, have moved to re-introduce anti-Covid restrictions.

All eyes in France will be on President Emmanuel Macron's speech Monday, when he will set out next steps as case numbers rise, while Argentina has extended its own measures until early August.

Rising concern over the Delta variant comes on the heels of the easing of restrictions in many countries, which has breathed

much-needed fresh air into many of the major economies.

The G20 has called for vaccination campaigns worldwide to be accelerated, pledging to do more to help developing countries give their citizens jobs.

While 70 percent of the population is vaccinated in some developed countries, the figure is less than 1.0 per cent for low-income countries, according to UN secretary general Antonio Guterres.

Equity markets were also spooked this week, as a report from the latest US central bank meeting showed a debate on tightening monetary support is underway, despite the ongoing health crisis.

Added to this are signs that the recovery in China is running out of steam. Still, forecasts from major institutions are optimistic.

The European Commission this week raised its Europe growth expectations for 2021, saying it now forecasts a rise of 4.8 per cent, compared to 4.3 per cent previously.

AFP

UK economic recovery slows as more COVID-19 curbs lifted

London, UK – Britain's economy grew for a fourth month running in May on further easing of lockdown measures but the rate of expansion slowed more than expected, official data showed.

Gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 0.8 per cent in May as restaurants and pubs welcomed customers back indoors for the first time since the end of last year, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said in a statement.

But that was down on April's 2.0-per cent growth rate. The analysts' consensus had been for a slowdown to 1.5-per cent growth in May.

"The economy grew for the fourth consecutive month, albeit at a slower pace than seen recently... (and) remains around three per cent below its pre-pandemic peak," said Jonathan Athow, deputy national statistician for economic statistics at the ONS.

"Pubs and restaurants, who were again able to welcome indoor guests, were responsible for the vast majority of the growth seen in May. Hotels also saw a

marked recovery as restrictions lifted," Athow added.

Offsetting a 37-per cent surge in accommodation and food services activity was a 16.5-per cent drop in production of transport equipment. This was owing to the global shortage in semiconductors hitting car manufacturing, the ONS said.

In the three months to May, total UK output grew by 3.6 per cent thanks also to strong retail sales, the ONS said.

Separate data showed UK exports rising in May, while imports dipped.

"May's weaker-than-expected increase in GDP underlines that the recovery to its pre-COVID-19 levels will be drawn out," forecast Samuel Tombs, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics.

He pointed to a "fading of some initial enthusiasm when businesses reopened.

"Rising COVID-19 infections also appear to be prompting some people to work from home again and to visit shops and services venues less frequently."

Overall, the global economy

has surpassed its pre-pandemic peak, data survey firm IHS Markit said at the end of June.

Following Friday's data, British finance minister Rishi Sunak said it was "great to see people back out and about thanks to the success of the vaccine rollout, and to see that reflected in" the GDP update.

The government on Thursday said that UK residents returning to England from the United States and most European countries will soon no longer have to self-quarantine if fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

The quarantine change will start from July 19, when the government hopes to remove virtually all coronavirus restrictions in England. Additionally, the government is expected to announce a plan in the next fortnight allowing entry to fully-vaccinated foreigners and British expatriates.

Broader plans to ease social distancing, mask-wearing and other virus curbs come despite a surge in infections of the highly contagious Delta variant.

AFP

EU prepares to send petrol cars to the scrap heap

Brussels, Belgium – Europe's prestigious carmakers lead the world in perfecting the internal combustion engine – but the days of the petrol motor are numbered, and the continent is changing gear.

The European Commission on Wednesday will unveil its plan to reduce carbon emissions from new vehicles to zero within the next decade, to fight climate change.

The EU plans to be carbon neutral by 2050, but petrol and diesel cars remains the continent's main mode of transport and the pride of its globally admired marques.

Sources in Brussels expect the commission's plan, part of a climate climate strategy, to foresee an end to new registrations of gas guzzlers from 2035.

Europe's existing emissions limit of less than 95 grams of CO2 per kilometre was to have been reduced by 37.5 per cent in 2030.

Exact figures are still under discussion, but Brussels is now expected to seek a 60 per cent reduction by 2030 and a 100 per cent reduction just five years later in 2035.

The economic damage the coronavirus pandemic has damaged the road vehicle market as a whole, but electric cars have been an exception, with growth accelerating.

Battery-powered cars represented eight per cent of new registrations in western Europe in the first five months of this year, with 356,000 new vehicles.

'Go to the wall'

This, noted analyst Matthias Schmidt, represents more than in the whole of 2019.

The impending new regulations will increase this trend, as they will not only spell doom for classic petrol and diesel motors but effectively force out hybrid and hybrid-rechargeable models.

These had once been seen as



In this file photo taken on June 8 Volkswagen ID 3 electric cars are pictured at the 'Glassy Manufaktur' production site in Dresden, eastern Germany (AFP)

a transitional technology, a key product for an industry that boasts of employing 14.6mn workers in Europe.

The car lobby is resigned to going along with the changeover, but wants help from Europe, in particular in terms of developing

a network of recharging points for battery cars.

"Under the right conditions, we are open to even higher CO2 reduction targets in 2030," said Oliver Zipse, president of the carmakers' association ACEA and chief executive of BMW.

The industry is divided about the best way forward, with some executives warning too quick a transition will drive up prices and favour Chinese competitors, which have an advance in battery technology.

But Europe's giant, Volkswa-

gen, which represents one sale in four on the continent, has followed US champion Tesla in backing an all-electric future.

In 2015, the firm was at the heart of a scandal over faked emissions tests on diesel motors, and is keen to restore its image with the public and regulators.

"There is a huge conflict going on at ACEA level," market analyst Schmidt explained.

"Volkswagen was forced to go early into electric vehicles because of Dieselgate, to improve their image. They have made huge investments and now they have got the products ready to meet CO2 legislation.

"They are in a perfect position to gain market share, and they will be happy to see others go to the wall." Volkswagen already plans to stop selling vehicle with internal combustion engines between 2033 and 2035.

"In general a car remains on the road for 15 years. If we want transport to be carbon free by

2050, we need the last combustion-driven car to be sold by 2035 at the latest," said Diane Strauss, of pressure group Transport and Environment.

The NGO's latest report, published in June, gives Volkswagen and Volvo good marks for their preparations, with Renault and Hyundai a little behind them.

But BMW, Daimler (which owns the Mercedes brand), Stellantis (Peugeot, Citron and Fiat) and Toyota are seen as lacking ambition and remaining too wed to hybrids.

MEP Pascal Canfin, chair of the environment committee in the European Parliament, said the 2035 target date is a good compromise.

He said 2030 would be too soon for industry and workers to adapt, while 2040 would be too late for Europe's climate goals.

But Canfin is holding out for a fund of several billion euros to help fund the transition.

AFP

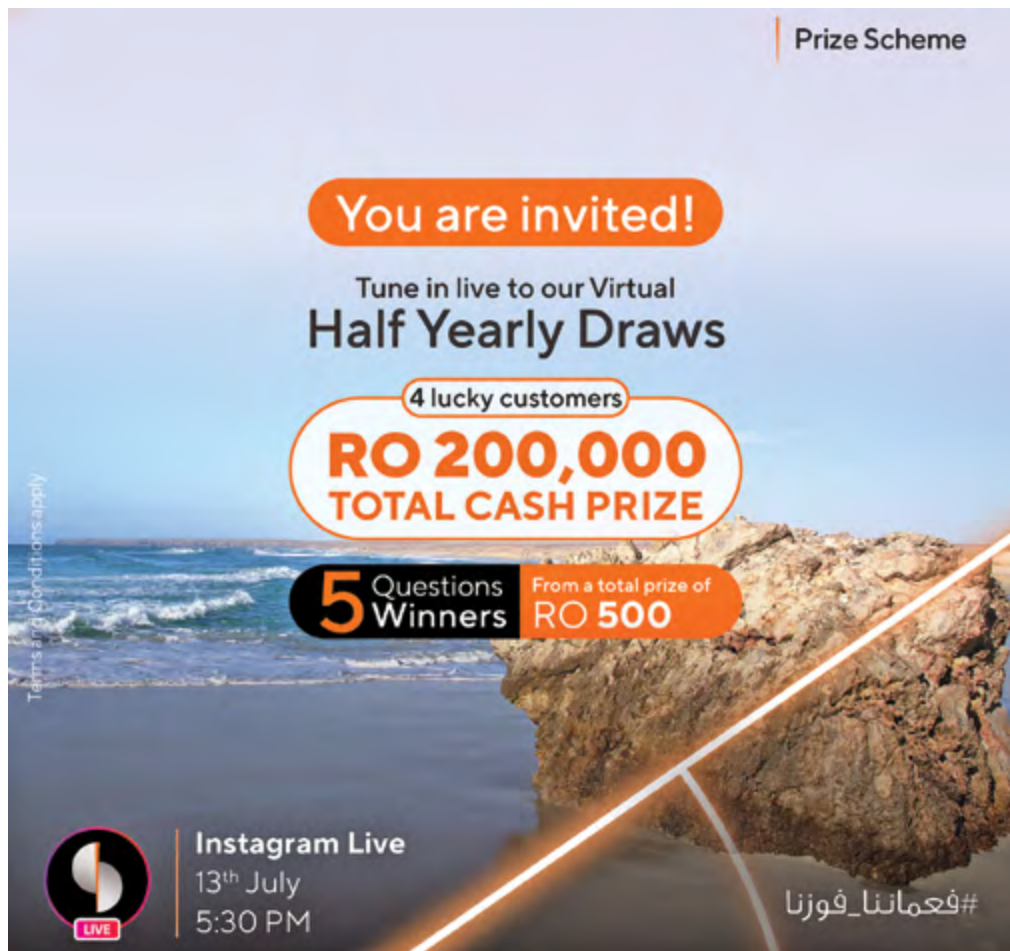
RO200,000 prizes to be won at Sohar International draws

Delivering on its promise of creating more winning journeys and providing more value to customers, Sohar International is set to conduct its half-year draws under its popular Prize Scheme 2021.

Everyone is invited to the virtual event which will be streamed live on the bank's official Instagram page - @sohar_intl - at 5.30pm on Tuesday, July 13. While the event will witness four lucky winners win from a total cash prize of RO200,000, as part of the half-year draws, there are prizes to be won for those who tune in to the virtual event. The bank engages with its live audience giving them an opportunity to win cash prizes during the live draws ceremony by answering simple questions about the bank.

The RO200,000 half-year draws' prize money will be distributed equally among two customers from the General segment and two customers from the Wealth Management segment; each receiving RO50,000.

Emphasising on the objective of the Sohar | Prize Scheme, Khalil al Hedaifi, chief retail banking officer said, "With the purpose of helping people 'win', Sohar International has always advised and encouraged customers to save judiciously, to help them realise their aspirations and dreams. Our prize scheme's diverse eligibility criteria, which promises more winners and more value for all customer segments, make regular saving an



easy practice for them. In fact, our virtual events, witness great attendance, and audience engagement, fulfilling the bank's objective of staying connected to a wider base of individuals. Therefore, we invite our loyal and valued customers to save with us, and increase their financial security. We truly seek through our innovative products and platforms to enrich and enhance the value we provide to our customers. This is reasserted through several of our efforts

that encourage savings to become a life style and not only a habit."

Over the last few years, Sohar International has also successfully harnessed its digital capabilities and reach, becoming the first bank in Oman to conduct live draws over its social media platform. This in itself is a case in point where the bank stays connected with its customer base to strongly communicate the 'savings' message, motivating them to be a part of the list of winners

of the popular Sohar Prize Scheme.

Hedaifi added, "We were the pioneers of virtual Prize Draws, continuing to bring winning closer for all customers. We believe we must win as a nation and under the theme of 'In Oman We Win', Sohar International Prize Scheme 2021 related events highlight the sultanate with its distinctive touristic features, giving us an opportunity to complement the government's efforts in promoting local and in-

ternational tourism. Over the last couple of months, the draws have highlighted beautiful governorates of Batinah (South), and the Dakhliyah region, shedding light on their several famous cultural and historical sites as well as some truly breath-taking scenery."

To be eligible in the Half-Yearly draws, customer from the general segment will need to maintain a minimum monthly average balance of RO100. As for the Wealth Management segment, customers will need to maintain an average monthly balance of RO40,000.

The 2021 Prize Scheme offers a total cash prizes worth over RO2.25mn to be rewarded to more than 1,400 customers.

Moreover, believing in the necessity to educate and spread awareness on the importance of savings among the minors and young generation, Sohar International has created a dedicated Savings Draw for them and doubled the minors' winning opportunities reaffirming the same. Catering to all segment types and increasing their benefits, this year scheme offers customers more draws, more chances, and more winners with the introduction of the newly added Salary Account Draws and beefing up the previous categories with more overall value in cash prizes.

Also, the Prize Scheme is not exclusive for accounts in Omani riyal only; saving accounts that are maintained in AED, GBP and USD are also eligible to participate in the scheme.



IWC launches pilot's watch chronograph edition on Oman

IWC Schaffhausen presents the Pilot's Watch Chronograph Edition 'Sultanate of Oman' (IW387910) to mark the country's 51st National Day on November 18, 2021. Limited to 100 pieces, the timepiece features a distinctive back engraving of 'Sultanate of Oman' in Arabic calligraphy, along with an image of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq.

The limited-edition timepiece can be ordered exclusively at luxury watch and jewellery boutique Mistal. This special edition celebrates IWC's long-standing relationship with Oman, one that dates back nearly seven decades - one that is enriched with true Omani history and was conceived at a time before Oman gained its independence.

The Royal Family of Oman brought IWC pocket watches into the country over 100 years ago through Port of Aden, an important trading post for the region. Hannes Pantli, current member of the board of directors of IWC Schaffhausen, visited Muscat for the first time in February 1974 and had the honour of

meeting Late His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. This was the beginning of a long and very interesting relationship between Schaffhausen and Oman. Since then, Hannes Pantli has regularly visited the sultanate, and IWC has created special watch sets for the Middle Eastern market, which were hugely successful.

The timepiece is powered by the IWC-manufactured 69380-calibre movement with a classic column-wheel design, which is housed in a bronze case with a 41mm diameter. IWC pays tribute to Oman's rich heritage and culture with this special edition featuring a striking blue dial perfectly complemented by a deep blue textile strap and titanium back.

Dharmesh A Khimji, managing director of Mistal said, "We are proud to have been associated with IWC for almost five decades. With its first limited edition in the modern era, we are honoured to dedicate this exclusive IWC to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq and our beautiful Oman."

Bank Muscat signs pacts with teams for Greens Sports 2021



Bank Muscat's flagship corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme continues to achieve great success across the sultanate with the signing of agreements to start implementing Green Sports projects in 2021.

This year, the bank is celebrating the 10th anniversary of its pioneering CSR programme and has increased the number of annual beneficiaries across the country from 15 to 20 teams. Agreements were recently signed at the bank's head office by the representatives of the Al Samdi Sports Team from Samail and the Al Hajr Sports & Cultural Team from Quriyat, and Talib Saif al Makhmari, manager - Community & Media Relations, Bank Muscat. More such agreements are expected to be signed 'virtually' with other beneficiaries in the coming weeks in keeping with the current situation.

Talib Saif al Makhmari, manager - Community & Media Relations, Bank Muscat, said, "The bank is delighted to sign agreements with the winners of Green Sports 2021, after which the teams can start implementing their respective projects. We wish all the teams great success in the implementation of their projects and hope that it will strengthen bonds within local communities by providing facilities for various sports, cultural

and social activities."

Of the 20 beneficiaries this year, 14 teams will be provided with floodlighting for their sports fields. These teams are as follows: Al Farfarah Sports Team (Bidbid); Al Kifah Sports Team (Suwaiq); Al Kefah Sports Team (Sohar); Al Mahader Sports & Cultural Team (Rustaq); Al Humida Sports & Cultural Team (Izki); Al Hajr Sports & Cultural Team (Quriyat); Al Ettihad Cultural Team (Bidiya); Al Arid Sports & Cultural Team (Ibri); Al Memoura Sports & Cultural Team (Al Kamil W'Al Wafi); Al Samdi Sports Team (Samail); Al Khuwairat Sports & Cultural Team (Khabourah); Al Dhahirh Sports Team (Jaalan Bani Bu Ali); Al Ghalila Sports, Cultural and Social Team (Al Suwaiq); and Al Ettifaq Sports and Cultural Team (Liwa).

The Al Soor Sports Team (Bahla); Al Husn Al Ahli Team (Salalah) and Al Shabab Sports, Cultural and Social Team (Yanqul) will receive support for natural greening of their sports fields, while artificial turf will be installed on the Wadi Nahez al Ahli Team's field in Salalah. The Al Majaz al Sughra Sports Team (Saham) and Al Ittihad Wudam al Sahel Sports Team (Mus-sanah) will be provided water-desalination systems to support their sports fields.



Badr al Samaa launches COVID-19 vaccination centre

Badr al Samaa Group of Hospitals launched the largest COVID-19 Vaccination Centre in the private healthcare sector of Oman at the National Museum, Muscat.

The COVID-19 Vaccination Centre at the National Museum was inaugurated by Jamal al Moosawi, secretary general, the National Museum, Oman and Dr Mazin bin Jawad al Khabouri, director general - DGPHE, Ministry of Health, Oman.

This programme was attended by Executive Directors of Badr al Samaa Moiden Bilal and Firasath Hassan, CEO, Sameer PT, COO, Jacob Oommen, CMO, K O Devassy and other top officials.

COVID-19 protocols were strictly followed during this brief event. This exclusive collaboration by Badr al Samaa and the National Museum comes in the wake of rising cases of COVID-19 infections especially the rising number of hospital admissions.

This will currently cater to corporate and company employees and gradually, with the support from MoH, on spot COVID-19 vaccination will be

made available.

The managing directors of Badr al Samaa Group of Hospitals, Abdul Latheef and Dr P A Mohammed said that during this steep rise of number of infected cases there are only two ways to control; aggressive vaccination and strict adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

Badr al Samaa Since being the largest healthcare provider cater to majority of population for vaccinations in private healthcare.

Such initiatives will go a long way to speed up the national vaccination program and hence save many lives.

Moosawi speaking on the occasion said, "It is a great opportunity for the National Museum to be associated with Badr al Samaa Group of Hospitals in this national COVID-19 vaccination programme and contribute towards fighting this pandemic. People who come here for vaccination will also get the glimpse of the rich culture and heritage of this great nation."

Dr Khabouri said, that private healthcare is now shoulder to shoulder with MoH in COVID-

19 vaccination drive and Badr al Samaa is the major contributor. "Such initiatives to open large vaccination centres will give thrust to the programme and we can reduce the burden from government vaccination centres and reach out to maximum population in less time.

"He appreciated the operational efficiency of Badr al Samaa in conducting the vaccination drive and appreciated new ideas like this.

Badr al Samaa, at the National Museum, is aiming to reach 2,000 vaccine doses a day, which will be the largest in one centre across private healthcare. The aim is to speed-up and complete the first dose for companies and corporate and getting prepared for second dose.

The MoH and Directorate of Private Health Establishments is extending full support to private healthcare establishments to expand the programme.

Along with this centre, COVID-19 vaccinations are happening at all 13 centres of Badr al Samaa, on-site locations, Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, labour camps, etc.

OBA commends banks for efforts to fight pandemic



Oman Banks Association (OBA) - an umbrella organisation to represent and promote the banking industry in Oman - has commended all the banks in the country for their efforts and exceptional measures to combat COVID-19.

OBA has particularly praised the health and safety procedures that all the banks adopted since the beginning of the pandemic for their staff, stakeholders and the general public. The association applauded the role and efforts of the Central Bank of Oman in providing necessary guidance, and communicating and coordinating with all the banks to combat the pandemic.

From holding virtual meetings efficiently to maintaining social distancing within the banks, the

bankers have been following the protocol for the safety of all.

They have worked relentlessly and made sure that their customers' banking needs are served and catered to during this extraordinary time. The banks were quick to respond to the rapidly changing economic situation and launched digital banking services and technologies to limit the spread of the virus and mitigate its impact both socially as well as economically. A senior spokesperson of OBA applauded the several CSR initiatives that the banks undertook to support the health sector. All the banks donated funds to the health sector for purchasing medical equipments and launched contact-less products and services to keep the community safe.

إعلان تخفيض رأس المال

وفقاً لأحكام المادة 150 من قانون الشركات التجارية،
تعلن شركة فراغ العرب (ش.م.م) المقيدة بالسجل التجاري رقم
1100247 بأنها بصدد تخفيض رأس من 250,000,000 إلى ريال
عماني 50,000,000.
وكل من له اعتراض على ذلك عليه أن يتقدم باستئناف اعتراضه لأمانة
السجل التجاري بوزارة التجارة والصناعة خلال 30 يوماً من تاريخه.



Mercedes-Benz GLC SUV, Coupé now available

Athletic, aerodynamic and elegantly high-tech, Mercedes-Benz premium SUVs are second to none. Until September 30, Mercedes-Benz Oman customers can drive away in the eye-catchingly sporty Mercedes-Benz GLC 200 Coupé starting from just RO27,995 including VAT, or the agile Mercedes-Benz GLC 300 4MATIC from just RO29,995 including VAT.

With such competitive prices, customers can look forward to enjoying all the comfort and versatility of a luxury family car with

the thrilling driving experience they expect from the award-winning brand.

“We’re thrilled to be able to offer two of our bestselling cars at such a price range. Setting the benchmark for midsize SUVs, they are in a league of their own, offering both strength and comfort. The exceptional quality of all our vehicles combined with our signature aftersales service is why so many choose to be part of the Mercedes-Benz family,” said Shaun Michael, chief executive officer at Mercedes-Benz Oman.

The Mercedes-Benz GLC 200 Coupé and the Mercedes-Benz GLC 300 4MATIC both come with more power, a front-end refresh, LED Performance headlights and the intuitive MBUX system.

Offering the best of both worlds, the Mercedes-Benz GLC 200 Coupé combines SUV performance and coupé agility, with wider aprons, new tailpipe trims, and stylish chrome elements. Meanwhile, with outstanding ride comfort, the Mercedes-Benz

More than RO250,000 in BankDhofar’s prize draws

BankDhofar has conducted the Mid-Year Grand Prize Draws of the Savings Account Scheme 2021. The draw saw two winners of RO25,000 each and one Al Riadah Priority Banking winner of RO200,000. The bank also conducted draws of the monthly guaranteed prizes monthly prizes for children, monthly prizes for youth, and monthly prizes for Amaan Retirees Banking Services’ customers.

Dr Tariq Taha, chief retail banking officer at BankDhofar said, “I would like to congratulate the winners of the mid-year grand prizes. BankDhofar’s Savings Scheme aims to spread the culture of saving within the society, and provides chances of winning to all family members. I encourage our customers to continue saving as they might be the lucky winners in the coming draws including the monthly draws, occasion draws, and year-end mega draws.”

With a total of RO2.304mn, the scheme is valid till December 2021. As per the prize draw

scheme, BankDhofar customers who save a minimum of RO100 in their accounts are eligible to enter the draws and get the chance to win in the Monthly Guaranteed Prizes for branches, worth total of RO708,000 (59 winners per month/ RO1,000 for each winner), Monthly Prizes for Children, worth total of RO177,000 (59 winners per month/ RO250 for each winner) and Monthly Prizes for Youth, worth total of RO30,000 (5 winners per month/ RO500 for each winner).

The bank has also introduced for the first time ever, monthly Prizes for Amaan Retirees Banking Services’ customers, worth total of RO300,000 (5 winners per month/ RO5,000 for each winner). BankDhofar will continue celebrating occasions with customers, the 2021 scheme includes Omani Woman’s Day Prizes, worth total of RO10,000 (10 winners / RO1,000 for each winner), and National Day Prizes, worth total of RO59,000 (59 winners / RO1,000 for each winner).



Lulu joins Sadia to donate over RO10,000 to Dar al Atta’a

As part of its corporate social responsibility initiatives, Lulu Oman has partnered with Sadia Chicken for a good cause. Lulu Group and Sadia have donated over RO10,000 to Dar al Atta’a association to make a difference in the lives of the underprivileged.

A cheque of RO10,271 was handed over by Ananth A V, director —Oman, Sri Lanka and India of LuLu Group, and Shabeer K A, regional director of Lulu Oman, to Dr Shamsa al Harthi, director general of Dar al Atta’a association. The amount will be given to eligible families registered with Dar al Atta’a.

As part of the initiative, held during the holy month of Ramadan, an amount of RO0.100 was passed on to Dar al Atta’a on every purchase of Sadia products at Lulu.

Director general of Dar al Atta’a expressed her thanks and gratitude to Sadia for their partnership with Dar al Atta’a. She said that the initiative came during the month of Ramadan, which is an opportunity for serving the society. “The initiative’s

revenue generation is for the needy families registered with Dar al Atta’a,” she added.

Commenting on the charity event, Ananth stated, “Our strategic intent is to serve the community we are part of by supporting local organisations and charities. We appreciate Sadia Chicken for their partnership with us and helping us do our fair bit for the society. We understand the needs of our clients and communities and will do everything to help make their lives better.”

Didier Gabriel, general manager of BRF (Sadia Chicken) in Oman, said that the company has always been proud of maintaining their partnership with Dar al Atta’a and has worked with all partners on provision of innovative and sustainable solutions to ensure the success of such charity initiative, during the month of Ramadan.

As a key promoter of social initiatives, Lulu has initiated several projects and contributions and has also joined hands with various firms to support the community towards a better tomorrow.



Bank Nizwa excels in quality assessment

Continuing to lead the sultanate’s Islamic finance industry, Bank Nizwa has added yet another milestone in its journey, with the bank’s Internal Audit Group achieving the highest possible rating of ‘Generally Conforms’ in an External Quality Assessment.

The rating implies that the relevant structures, policies and procedures of the department, as well as the processes by which they are applied, comply with the requirements of the Standards of Institute of Internal Auditors and Code of Ethics in all material respects.

The main objectives of the Quality Assessment were to evaluate conformance of Bank

Bank Nizwa’s Board Audit Committee and identify opportunities to enhance management and work process.

Sayyid Amjad Mohammed Ahmed al Busaidi, chairman Audit Committee, said, “Bank Nizwa is committed to the highest degree of corporate governance and enhancement of controls as it continues to provide value added services to its ever growing customer base. The results are a testimony to the effective risk based internal audit services being administered at Bank Nizwa especially during these challenging and unprecedented times.”

As the largest and fastest growing full-fledged Islamic bank



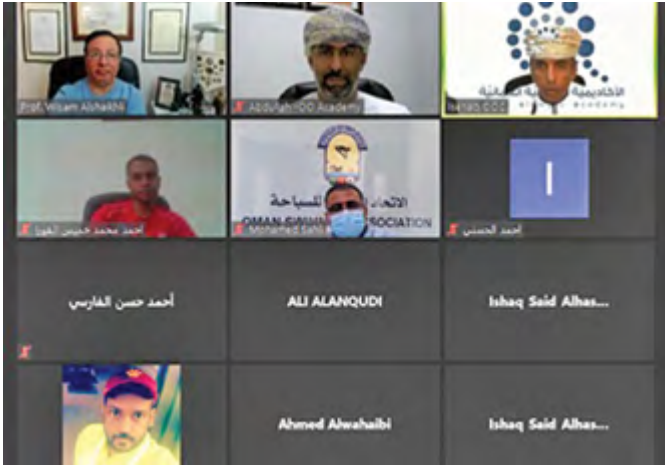
Nizwa’s Internal Audit Activities to the norms of Central Bank of Oman, Capital Market Authority and The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA).

They were also aimed at evaluating the effectiveness in carrying out its mission as set forth in its Charter, the expectations of

in the sultanate, Bank Nizwa is leading the sector’s growth through adopting best modern practices in its working methodology. The bank constantly seeks to demonstrate utmost resilience in all its operations, exhibiting exceptional performance across its various departments. Obtaining such accolades serves as a testament to its unceasing efforts and they rightfully manifest its most trusted position within Oman’s Islamic banking sector.

The management of the bank is successfully working towards execution of various strategies and plans for growth, that contribute to national development and the country’s economic diversification agenda.

OOA begins course on talent selection



A course for the medical selection of sports talents organised by Oman Olympic Academy (OOA) began online on Sunday, with the participation of a number of sports federations and committees. It will last for three days.

The course aims to shed light on the most important elements of talent selection represented in the health and medical impact of the talents. As well as, reviewing the experiences of leading countries such as Britain, Japan and America in this field. At the end

of the course, participants will be able to identify the levels of selection for talents, and the correct foundations for managing the medical and health file and the future impact of the athlete and the most important medical examinations during the selection periods.

The course will be lectured by Professor Wissam al Sheikhy, president of the International Federation of Sports Sciences - director of the Scientific Academy for Research and Training in London.

Changan CS95 4WD: High performance intelligent SUV

Changan’S high-performance intelligent seven-seat SUV CS95 is now available at monthly EMI starting from RO 215 for six years financing through Bank Muscat till this month end. Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment, which is part of Bahwan International Group also announced that low EMI offer which includes five per cent Value Added Tax (VAT).

The 2.0lt turbo engine, 224 hp, 6-speed AT, and 4WD Changan CS95 which magnifies driving experience with sophisticated luxury and superior comfort has been designed to stir the driving emotions. Changan CS95 4WD features Business class comfort with perforated leather seats and lane departure warning. With a commanding presence and muscular stance, Changan CS95 is designed to demand attention wherever it goes. With meticulously crafted details complemented by convenient technology, the CS95 ensures refined luxury in every drive for up to seven passengers.

With a range of innovative driving technologies, the CS95 delivers an assured sense of confidence and control to the driver.

Its Blue Core Powertrain Technology based on the principles of power, clean and quiet provides owners with a highly efficient and energy saving performance.

A spokesperson for AGAE said, “We are delighted to offer low EMI on CS95 which is packed with endless features and has numerous advantages over its segment competition. CS95, a flagship model of Changan, is an ideal seven-seater SUV for a large modern family who wants to travel in lux-



ury, with business class comfort in all road conditions with its intelligent 4WD system. Under the hood is a Blue Core 2.0lt turbocharged engine mated with a six speed AT which produces a 360 Nm of torque.”

Vehicle specifications

CS95’s vehicle specifications includes length x width x height of 4949mm x 1930mm x 1790mm, Blue Core 2.0lt T GDI Turbocharged Gasoline Direct Injection engine, wheelbase of 2810mm, maximum output of 233 HP at 5000-5500 rpm, maximum torque of 360 Nm at 1750-3500 rpm, tyres with 55/245 R19 alloy wheels and fuel tank capacity of 74 litres.

A flagship model

Changan CS95 4WD wide-winged grille represents strength and comfort and its matte texture with a bright strip are well matched. The original C-shaped light combines position lights, steering lamps, and daytime running lights. The sculpted waistline wraps around the entire body, creating an extraordinary visual. The floating roof design affords the vehicle a sense of speed. The two-tone rim design highlights the dynamic outline.

Changan shows ingenuity by integrating its V logo in the details. The refined instrument panel with silver highlights aligns with the exquisite man-machine function button. Broad central control matches high-grade multi-functional storage space. Leather seats feature elaborate stitching. A variety of seating combinations are offered to meet a diversity of customer needs.

Safety elements

Fitted out with Bosch MPC2Plus camera, CS95 can detect the lane line and to warn drivers when deviating from the lane, preventing accidents from fatigue or distracting driving. The distance lights and passing lights can be switched intelligently when driving at night. CS95 can also automatically detect speed limit and avoid speeding when driving on express way.

Air defences installed at Kabul airport after Taliban claim taking over 85% of Afghanistan

Kabul, Afghanistan - Afghanistan's Kabul airport has been fitted with an air defence system to counter incoming rockets, officials said on Sunday, as the Taliban pressed on with a blistering offensive across the country.

Washington and its allies are due to end their military mission in Afghanistan at the end of next month, even as the insurgents say they now control 85 per cent of the country - a claim impossible to independently verify and disputed by the government.

The fundamentalist group's rapid gains in recent weeks have raised fears about the security of the capital and its airport, with NATO keen to secure a vital exit route to the outside world for foreign diplomats and aid workers.

'The newly installed air defence system has been operational in Kabul since 2:00 am Sunday,' the Interior Ministry said. 'The system has proven useful in the world in repelling rocket and missile attacks.'

Interior Ministry spokesman Tariq Arian said it had been installed at the airport, though officials did not offer details about the type of system or who had installed it.

The Taliban have regularly launched rockets and mortars at government forces across the countryside, with the extremist Islamic State group (IS) carrying out similar strikes on the capital in 2020.

IS also claimed responsibility for a rocket attack this year at Bagram Air base, the biggest US military facility in the country, which was recently handed over to Afghan forces.



An Afghan soldier takes a selfie inside the Bagram US air base after all US and NATO troops left the base, 70km north of Kabul on July 5 (AFP)

Over the years the US military installed several C-RAMs (Counter Rocket, Artillery and Mortar Systems) across its bases, including at Bagram, to destroy incoming rockets targeting the facilities, a foreign security official and media reports said.

The C-RAMS includes cameras to detect incoming rockets and alert local forces.

From bad to worse

Turkey has promised to provide security for Kabul airport once US and NATO troops leave next month.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday said Turkey and the United States had

agreed on the 'scope' of how the airport would be managed under the control of Turkish forces. Taliban militants have waged a rapid offensive across the country, but mostly in the northern and western provinces, since early May, when the final US troops began leaving Afghanistan.

India on Sunday became the latest country to evacuate diplomats as the security situation deteriorates.

Last week Russia announced it had closed its consulate in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-i-Sharif, while China also evacuated 210 nationals from the country. The fighting has led some veteran warlords to deploy

militiamen to counter any attacks. In the western province of Herat, where the Taliban this week captured a key border crossing with Iran, veteran warlord Ismail Khan mobilized his fighters in the provincial capital.

Pakistan's envoy to Kabul called on the international community to help strengthen Afghanistan's security forces, warning that deploying militia to fight the Taliban could worsen the situation in the violence-ravaged country.

"If things translate into some kind of warfare between militias and Taliban, it will be dangerous," Mansoor Ahmad Khan said on Saturday. "Therefore, it is im-

portant that Afghan government's capacity to defend these attacks and these security challenges is strengthened."

The Afghan government has repeatedly dismissed the Taliban's gains as having little strategic value, but the seizure of multiple border crossings and the taxes they generate will likely fill the group's coffers with new revenue.

The insurgents have routed much of northern Afghanistan in recent weeks, and the government holds little more than a constellation of provincial capitals that must largely be reinforced and resupplied by air.

AFP



Afghan security personnel stand guard along the road amid ongoing fight with Taliban fighters, in Kandahar on Friday (AFP)

India pulls staff from Kandahar consulate

Kabul, Afghanistan - India has evacuated about 50 diplomats and security personnel from its consulate in Kandahar, the former Taliban bastion in southern Afghanistan, after days of intense fighting, officials said on Sunday.

The insurgents claimed this week that they now control 85 per cent of Afghanistan, much of it seized since early May when US-led foreign forces began their final withdrawal from the country.

The Taliban also clashed with government forces this week on the edge of Kandahar city, the capital of Kandahar province, where the hardline movement was born.

'The Consulate General of India has not been closed. However, due to the intense fighting near Kandahar city, India based personnel have been brought back for the time being,' India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement. 'This is purely a tempo-

rary measure until the situation stabilises. The consulate continues to operate through our local staff members.'

About 50 Indian personnel, including some six diplomats, have been evacuated from the consulate, a source said.

It was still unclear whether they were brought to Kabul or evacuated to New Delhi.

Last week Russia announced it had closed its consulate in the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

Earlier this month China also evacuated 210 nationals from the country.

The Taliban's rapid gains have seen their fighters capture key border crossings and even attack a provincial capital. The US withdrawal is now more than 90 per cent complete, the Pentagon announced this month, and President Joe Biden said on Thursday the US military mission would end on August 31.

AFP

Iraqi PM visits 'tortured' activist in hospital

Baghdad, Iraq - Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa al Kadhemi early on Sunday visited in hospital a pro-democracy activist who has been critical of pro-Iran armed factions, after the campaigner had been abducted and assaulted.

Ali al Mikdam, a young Iraqi journalist, activist and researcher, had disappeared on Friday, sparking widespread concern from his friends and supporters, before he was released late on Saturday, injured, on the outskirts of Baghdad.

A tweet from Khademi's office said the Prime Minister had checked up 'on the health of journalist and activist Ali al Mikdam in one of Baghdad's hospitals after security forces released him from his kidnappers'.

Mikdam was a key figure in anti-government protests which swept Iraq for months from October 2019 calling for the removal of Iraq's political class, which activists branded as inept and corrupt.

The protesters also rallied against the influence of Iran in the war-battered country, where powerful pro-Tehran armed factions have been integrated into the national security apparatus.

Mikdam, after receiving threats, had moved to Istanbul and then Arbil in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

He had returned to Baghdad eight days ago, his mother said while he was missing on Friday.

"Only two days ago he told me he had received threats and gave me the phone numbers of his friends to contact them if



A file photo of Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al Kadhimi (AFP)

anything bad happens to him," his mother had said then, holding back tears.

Killings, attempted murders and abductions have targeted more than 70 activists since the protest movement erupted in late 2019.

Authorities have failed to publicly identify or charge the perpetrators of the violence, for which no groups have claimed responsibility.

Pro-democracy activists are often portrayed as foreign stooges by Iraq's powerful pro-Iran factions.

Last month, Iraq freed a commander of the state-affiliated Hashed al Shaabi, a Shiite paramilitary coalition, two weeks after he was arrested over the murder of a pro-democracy activist.

Mikdam's most recent analysis, published with the Washington Institute for Near East Policy last month, criticised the ongoing wave of assassinations targeting journalists and scholars by armed factions.

AFP

Shell lands near coalition base in eastern Syria: Monitor

Beirut, Lebanon - A mortar shell landed in a gas field in eastern Syria housing coalition forces, a war monitor reported on Sunday.

It fell in the Conoco gas field in Deir Ezzor province, near a base of the US-led coalition battling Islamic State group remnants, said the Britain-based Syrian Ob-

servatory for Human Rights.

The war monitor said a blast was heard in the area but there were no immediate reports of casualties.

It said pro-Iran militias were likely responsible for the incident that followed a series of recent attacks on the nearby Al-Omar

oil field, which also houses coalition forces.

The state-run SANA news agency said an explosion was heard from the area of the Conoco gas field, but did not provide additional details.

The coalition was not immediately available for comment.

The latest incident came amid heightened tensions following US strikes last month against three targets Washington said were used by pro-Iran groups in eastern Syria and western Iraq.

On Wednesday, Syrian Kurdish forces said they repelled drone attacks near a major coali-

tion base at the Al-Omar oil field.

Last Sunday, Kurdish forces said two unidentified rocket-propelled grenades landed on the western side of the Al-Omar oil field, without causing casualties.

The Observatory blames pro-Iran militias for both attacks.

AFP

Blast in Sudan port city kills four as tensions rise

Khartoum, Sudan - An explosion has killed four people in a Sudanese Red Sea port city, officials said on Sunday, the latest in a series of violent incidents in the area.

Tensions have been simmering in recent days in Port Sudan where anti-government protesters have reportedly blocked roads over rising insecurity.

Local media have linked the unrest to rejection by the Heden-doa tribe of an October peace deal between rebel groups and the Sudanese government.

Hadendoa, the largest subdivision of the Beja people in the region, fear their tribe will be under-represented in regional legislative and executive bodies under the Juba agreement.

Saturday's blast took place late in the evening at a busy sporting club in Port Sudan, the provincial capital of the Red Sea state, and also involved an armed attack.

'An explosive device went off at Al-Amir club...killing four people,' the Central Committee of Sudan Doctors said in a statement. Three others were wounded after being shot or stabbed, it added. Witnesses said the attack was carried out by unidentified armed men on a motorcycle but it was not immediately clear what motivated it.



This file picture shows Russian navy ship docked at the port of the Sudanese city of Port Sudan (AFP)

Authorities in the Red Sea state said in a Sunday statement that one of the perpetrators had been arrested.

Dozens of people later gathered outside the public prosecutor's office in Port Sudan demand the assailants be brought to justice, witnesses said.

Saturday's explosion was the

latest in a series of violent incidents in Port Sudan, including an attack on Friday by unidentified assailants on security forces.

On Saturday a man was killed during a fight on a public bus and that same day there was a failed bid to attack a hotel with explosive, authorities said.

A government statement said

that five people were killed on Saturday alone, while six others were wounded in recent unrest.

The doctors' committee, an independent union of medics, blamed 'tribal strife' for the violence and urged security forces to step in.

Sudan has been led by a transitional civilian-military adminis-

tration following the April 2019 ouster of president Omar Bashir, who ruled Sudan with an iron fist for 30 years.

The country has since been undergoing a rocky period marked by a wrenching economic crisis and deepening political division.

AFP

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Australia records first death in Sydney latest outbreak

Sydney, Australia - Australia announced its first coronavirus-related death in the current Sydney virus outbreak on Sunday, as the country's biggest city struggles to bring the Delta variant under control.

The woman in her 90s died on Saturday, hours after testing positive for COVID-19, and was also the first death from a locally-acquired infection in Australia this year. It came as authorities announced a record 77 new cases, and warned that numbers were expected to spike above 100 on Monday.

"Tomorrow and the few days afterwards will be worse, much worse than we've seen today," New South Wales state premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

Sydney is now in its third week of lockdown, but the number of new cases continues to grow among a population that is overwhelmingly unvaccinated.

Lockdown rules were tightened on Friday and Berejiklian warned that stay-at-home orders were expected to remain in place unless there was a dramatic turnaround.

"Given where we're at and given the lockdown was supposed to be lifted on Friday, everybody can tell it's highly un-



A couple make their way to a supermarket for last minute shopping ahead of new restrictions in the Fairfield suburb of Sydney on Friday (AFP)

likely at this stage, given where the numbers are," she said.

Sydney has recorded 566 new infections since the beginning of the outbreak mid-June.

While that is low compared to most global cities, Australia has taken a zero-tolerance approach to widespread commu-

nity transmission throughout the pandemic. Authorities have been quick to impose restrictions in an attempt to stamp out clusters early, and the country's borders remain largely shut with only about 10 per cent of Australians fully vaccinated.

The government launched a new advertising campaign Sunday encouraging people to 'arm yourself' against COVID-19 by getting jabbed, though vaccines are yet to be offered to most under-40s.

Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly said other 'graphic' adverts would be broadcast in Sydney

urging people to follow stay-at-home orders, as police step up enforcement amid reports that flouting of the rules was widespread. Australia has recorded over 31,000 cases of COVID-19 and 911 deaths in a population of about 25mn to date.

AFP



The woman, who lived alone and received at-home nursing care, was admitted to the OLV Hospital in the Belgian city of Aalst

Nonagenarian infected with 'two variants'

Paris, France - A 90 year old woman who died after falling ill with COVID-19 was infected with both the Alpha and Beta variants of the coronavirus at the same time, researchers in Belgium said on Sunday, adding that the rare phenomenon may be underestimated.

The unvaccinated woman, who lived alone and received at-home nursing care, was admitted to the OLV Hospital in the Belgian city of Aalst after a spate of falls in March and tested positive for COVID-19 the same day.

While her oxygen levels were initially good, her condition deteriorated rapidly and she died five days later.

When medical staff tested for the presence of any variants of concern they found that she was carrying both the Alpha strain, which originated in Britain, and the Beta variant first detected in South Africa.

"Both these variants were circulating in Belgium at the time, so it is likely that the lady was co-infected with different viruses from two different people," said molecular biologist Anne Vankeerberghen from the OLV Hospital who led the research.

"Unfortunately, we don't know how she became infected."

Vankeerberghen said it was difficult to say whether the co-infection played a role in the fast deterioration of the patient.

The research, which has not yet been submitted to a medical journal for publication, is being presented at the European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases.

While Vankeerberghen said in a press release that there had been 'no other published cases' of similar co-infections, she added that the 'phenomenon is probably underestimated'.

This is because of limited testing for variants of concern, she said, calling for an increase in the use of fast PCR testing to detect known variant mutations.

In January, scientists in Brazil reported that two people had been simultaneously infected with two different strains of the coronavirus, but the study has yet to be published in a scientific journal.

In comments reacting to the research, Lawrence Young, a virologist and Professor of Molecular Oncology at the University of Warwick, said it was not a surprise to find an individual infected with more than one strain.

"This study does highlight the need for more studies to determine whether infection with multiple variants of concern affects the clinical course of COVID-19 and whether this in any way compromises the efficacy of vaccination," Young added.

AFP

Thai beauty pageant investigated after virus cluster

Bangkok, Thailand - Thai beauty queens who took part in a pageant last month could face criminal charges for not wearing masks, police warned on Sunday, after a cluster of 22 infections emerged from the event.

Thirteen contestants and nine others associated with the Miss Grand Samut Sakhon pageant, which was held at a Bangkok venue late June, have tested positive for the virus, officers said.

Thailand is grappling with a deadly third wave of infections with 9,539 new cases announced on Saturday and 86 deaths.



This file photo shows contestants posing during the Miss Grand Samut Sakhon beauty pageant, in Bangkok on June 27 (AFP)

"There are likely to be many people involved in the pageant including contestants who violated rules and regulations," Piya

Tawichai, deputy commissioner of the metropolitan police told reporters in Bangkok on Sunday.

Organisers had got permis-

sion to hold the event, but had to comply with 20 specific rules, including mask wearing, police said.

"People who attended the pageant and did not wear masks also (breached) the emergency decree and diseases control laws," Piya said.

Organisers and participants in the province-level pageant were being investigated and could face possible criminal charges, the force added.

Photos on the event's Facebook page show finalists in gowns and sashes, not wearing masks and not socially distancing.

Comment has been sought from pageant organisers.

Late last week, the Thai government announced a curfew across Bangkok and nine other hotspot provinces, which comes into effect on Monday, barring people from venturing out between 9.00pm and 4.00am.

Thailand has registered a total of 336,371 cases and 2,711 fatalities. Most of the infections have occurred since April.

The country is fast running out of hospital beds and the Thai government is facing heat over a slow vaccine roll-out and limited testing.

AFP

Six years a slave: Indian farm workers exploited in Italy

Sabaudia, Italy - When Balbir Singh refers to his ordeal, he uses the Italian word 'macello', which roughly translates as 'mess' - but it is hardly enough to convey what the migrant Indian farm worker has endured.

For six years, he lived in what can only be described as slave-like conditions tending cattle in the province of Latina, a rural area south of Rome that is home to tens of thousands of Indian migrant workers like him.

"I was working 12-13 hours a day, including Sundays, with no holidays, no rest," Singh told AFP.

The farm owner paid him €100 to €150 a month, he said, which amounts to less than 50 cents an hour.

The legal minimum for farm workers is around €10 an hour.

Singh was rescued by a police raid on March 17, 2017 after appealing for help via Facebook and WhatsApp to local Indian community leaders and an Italian rights activist.

Officers found him living in a caravan, with no gas, hot water or electricity, and eating the leftovers that his boss either threw in the bin or gave to chickens and pigs.

Singh had to wash in the sta-

bles, with the same hosepipe he used to clean cattle, and it was made clear to him he should not complain.

"When I found a lawyer ready to help me, (the owner) told me... 'I'll kill you, I'll dig a hole, throw you in it, and fill it up'... he had a gun, I saw it," he recalled.

Singh said he was beaten up a couple of times, and had his identity papers taken away.

His former employer is now on trial for labour exploitation, while Singh is living in a secret location for fear of retribution.

Brutal exploitation

Singh's story is extreme, but it fits into a wider picture of brutal exploitation of migrant farm labourers in the Agro Pontino - the Pontine Marshes, the plain around Latina - and elsewhere in Italy.

The UN's special rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery estimated in 2018 that more than 400,000 agricultural workers in Italy risk being exploited and almost 100,000 likely face 'inhumane conditions'.

Last month, a 27 year old from Mali collapsed and died in the southeastern Apulia region after working a day in the fields in temperatures of up to 40°C.



This file photo shows Balbir Singh in his house in the coastal city of Sabaudia, south of Rome on June 24 (AFP)

In the Agro Pontino, a major hub for greenhouse farming, floriculture and buffalo mozzarella production, Indians have been a presence since the mid-1980s.

They work on land drained from marshes in the 1930s, one of the biggest public works projects enacted under dictator Benito Mussolini.

Sociologist Marco Omizzolo, the rights activist who helped free Singh, says between 25,000 and 30,000 Indians live in the Agro Pontino, mostly Sikhs from the Punjab region.

Under an illegal but well-established system, they live under the thumb of 'caporali', the gangmasters who recruit farm labourers on behalf of land owners.

Typically, they are offered

contracts but then are paid for only a fraction of their work.

"You may work 28 days, but they'll mark only four on your pay slip, so at the end of the month you may get 200, 300 euros," Omizzolo told AFP.

"Formally, it is all by the book," he added.

The reality is far grimmer, as shown by a recent police investigation that offered fresh evidence of widespread opioid abuse among the Indian community.

That operation led to the arrest of a doctor in the beach town of Sabaudia. He was accused of illegally prescribing more than 1,500 boxes of Depalgos, a powerful painkiller containing Oxycodone and given to cancer patients, to 222 Indian farm workers.

"The drug presumably allowed them to work longer in the fields by relieving pain and fatigue," Latina chief prosecutor Giuseppe De Falco told AFP.

'Fight for rights'

The problem of exploitation of farm workers has not gone unnoticed in parliament. It was under an anti-caporali law passed in 2016 that Singh's employer was prosecuted.

But unions say there are still too few checks and labour inspectors to enforce the law properly.

Sociologist Omizzolo, who works with the Eurispes think tank, spent years researching farm labour abuse in the Latina area - some of it undercover.

He lived for three months in Bella Farnia, a village mostly occupied by Indians, working incognito in the fields.

He, too, now lives under police protection, after several death threats.

In 2019, he was given a knighthood by President Sergio Mattarella in recognition of his 'courageous work'.

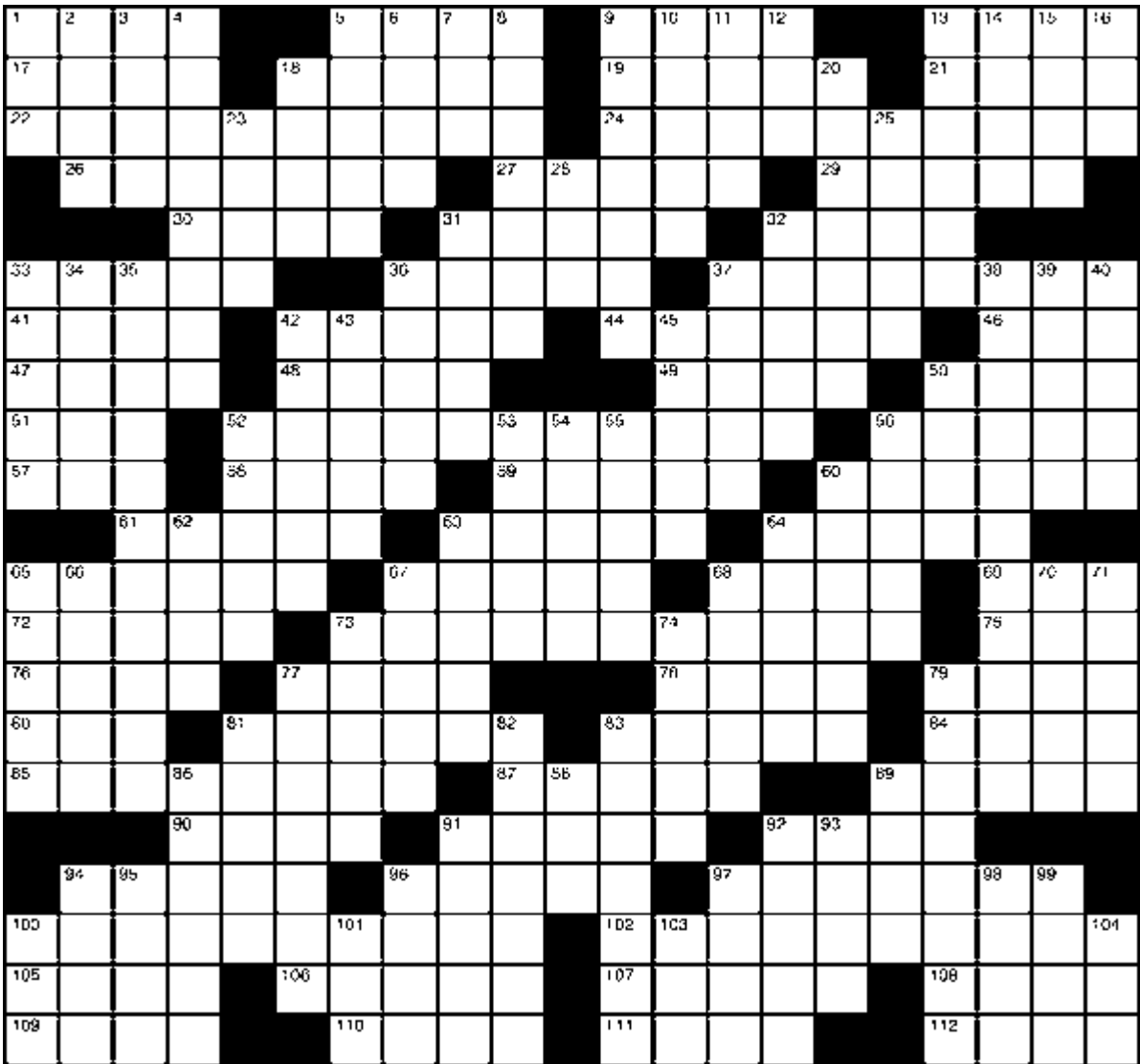
In 2016, the sociologist was instrumental, along with the Flai Cgil trade union, in organising the first-ever strike of the Agro Pontino's Indian workers.

Since then, their hourly pay has risen from three euros or less per hour to around five euros - although this is still only half the legal minimum.

Omizzolo recognises the working conditions are still far from ideal. But the protest, he said, made the Indians understand that 'it pays to fight for your rights'.

AFP

DAILY CROSSWORD



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ACROSS

- 1 Soothing ointment
5 Meat case choice
9 Yipes!
13 Geological elevation
17 Pavarotti encore
18 Hawaiian porch
19 "Inception" director
21 Fermented brews
22 1920s gangster movie star
24 Lee Strasberg
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30 Post-employment inv.
31 Proverbial crowd
32 Inning thirds
33 One of the Pep Boys
36 Attention getters
37 Elastic
41 To the sheltered side
42 Patrick Ewing move
44 Hunting dog
46 Norma or Charlotte
47 Gingrich
48 "___ ol' cowhand ..."
49 Architect van der Rohe

- 50 ___ Nostra
51 Chap
52 Vegetable grower
56 Has a price
57 DDE's command
58 "... 'tis folly to be ___"
59 Some Great Lakes Indians
60 "Merry Widow" garb
61 River to the North Sea
63 Kind of gunner
64 Wrestler's sound
65 Vietnamese delta
67 Throng
68 Leif's father
69 Super, California style
72 Prime rib style
73 Gefilte fish condiment
75 Vigoda or Lincoln
76 "Deutschland ___ Alles"
77 Puts on
78 Key ___ pie
79 Thailand, once
80 Eng. ___ I and II
81 Functioned
83 Destinies
84 "Do ___ others ..."
85 Therapy time slots
87 Historical phase

- 89 Workbench clamps
90 Concerning
91 Ignite
92 Borscht ingredient
94 Computer telephone hookup
96 Garden tool
97 Jones or Smith
100 Hoofers for hire
102 Texas pianist
105 Revival meeting shout
106 Propaganda pamphlet
107 Call forth
108 VIP's auto
109 Creation noise?
110 Noah's boat replicas
111 Yanks' opponents
112 Time periods

DOWN

- 1 Snare
2 ___ of expertise
3 MGM symbol
4 Petty tyrant
5 Helen's beloved
6 ___ even keel
7 Churchill's "few"
8 Chef's milieu
9 Eternal
10 Steve's Eydie
11 Oh dear!
12 Beaver's project
13 Chinese communist

- 14 Panache
15 Faction
16 Volcanic output
18 Swedish actress
Olin
20 Essences
23 Gruesome
25 ___to: indulge
28 Branch
31 Cogitate
32 Aquatic mammal
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34 Alaskan native
35 Super Bowl champs: 1969
36 Rapidly
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38 Jogs and lifts weights
39 Waste maker?
40 Bakery staple
42 Making weary
43 Entertain
45 ___ Kelly, clown
50 Before ball or dog
52 Womb-mates
53 Phobias
54 "Taken for ___"
55 Stair part
56 Sofa
60 Predicaments
62 "... their shining ___"; see 7 Down
63 Not as good
64 Dirt
65 Manhandles

- 66 Composer/pianist
Blake
67 Goose calls
68 A Sitwell
70 Lessen
71 Recording auditions
73 Singer Lena
74 Woe!
77 Entryway rug
79 Fitting
81 ___ and dined
82 Takes off
83 "___ Amber"
86 Aluminum ___
88 Cushion
89 "___, vidi, vici": L.
91 Mote
92 Moolah?
93 ___ Stanley Gardner
94 "I Remember ___"
95 Yoked beasts
97 Self-important person
98 Conservation innovator
99 Late columnist
Bombeck
100 Bar bill
101 Depression agcy.
103 "___ Maria"
104 Contrary votes

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

Right around dinnertime, the urge to connect with someone on a very deep level will cross your mind -- and your heart. You already have someone in mind, but the universe may have other plans for you. Stay open to new possibilities and don't turn down any offers to be introduced to someone new. You never know. This time might just be different.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

You're very close to your coworkers and neighbours. These people, and your friends, often feel like extended family to you. So when someone calls you and sounds rather plaintive, don't hesitate to use all your intellectual wiles to get the story out of them. They obviously need to talk, or they wouldn't have contacted you. But some people have trouble accepting help.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

If you're attached, you might want to pay some very special attention to your significant other for the next couple of days. In particular, be sure to pay more attention to your sweetie than you do to anyone they're less than confident around. Yes indeed, it could be time for a bit of jealousy to rear its ugly little head, even if you're not responsible for it.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

You've done nothing but work, worry and take care of business for days. So why not give yourself a night off? You've certainly had an array of offers, and some of them were quite appealing. Stop trying to resist and pick the one that most strikes your fancy. You know what they say about all work and no play? That applies to all worry and no play, too. Time to chill out.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

You want to socialise, but you probably don't have the energy to get dressed and go out. Find a happy medium. Order up a pizza, see if there are any games on and have an impromptu party. It's the perfect evening to have some friends over to your place. And when have you ever had to talk anyone into coming over? There's no doubt that house is considered the gang's clubhouse.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Just when you thought you'd like nothing better than to gather your friends together and hit the town, you've suddenly decided it might be even more fun to lure them all over to your place for the evening. And they'd be crazy to argue. Whether the gang's all out patrolling the town or just sharing a pizza at home, it's always great fun -- as long as you're hosting the party.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

It doesn't take much to talk you into a change of scenery. So if someone suggests a trip to you, you'll have your planner out and your boss on the phone in record time. Oh, and if there's a certain someone out there you'd like to spend some time alone with -- the kind of time that doesn't involve a workplace, a movie theatre or a television set -- this would also be the perfect time to plan it.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

After days of intrigue, secrecy and craving nothing more than total privacy, you've suddenly got a serious case of boredom -- and you know just what to do about it. Find your friends and spend some time with them. It's true what they say about laughter -- it's the best medicine for whatever ails you. You could invite them all over to your place, but aren't you tired of staying in?



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Exactly how long have you been trying to help a dear one curtail their bad habits? Can you remember? Keep in mind you've been working so diligently at that project that it's also been a while since you've allowed yourself to have any fun. You've been trying as hard -- and, in some cases, harder -- than they have. Your job now, should you choose to accept it is to cut them loose.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Still thinking about traveling? Well, the moment has come to stop thinking and start planning. If you have vacation time coming, there's no better time to take it, especially since things have loosened up a bit at work. If you have a favourite person you'd like to drag along for the ride, by all means get him or her in on the action sooner rather than later.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Everyone's all about socialising now. What a coincidence! You just so happen to be in the mood to socialise too! The good news is you'll blend right in, thanks to your current frame of mind and heart. You'll probably also make some new friends. It's tough to resist someone with a great personality, especially when they flaunt it with such panache!



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You're definitely hard working -- that's for sure. So no matter what you're asked to do, you'll find the energy and time to get it done. Don't let anyone's jealousy stop you from accomplishing what you've set out to do, either. It's not your fault you know how to prioritise, organise and get things done - and all the while, grab the attention of the higher-ups.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Which county did Ravi Shastri play for?

- a. Glamorgan
b. Leicestershire
c. Gloucestershire
d. Lancashire

2. Who was the first Indian to win the World Amateur Billiards title?

- a. Geet Sethi
b. Wilson Jones
c. Michael Ferreira
d. Manoj Kothari

3. Who is the first Indian woman to win an Asian Games gold in 400m run?

- a. M L Valsamma
b. P T Usha
c. Kamaljit Sandhu
d. K Malleshwari

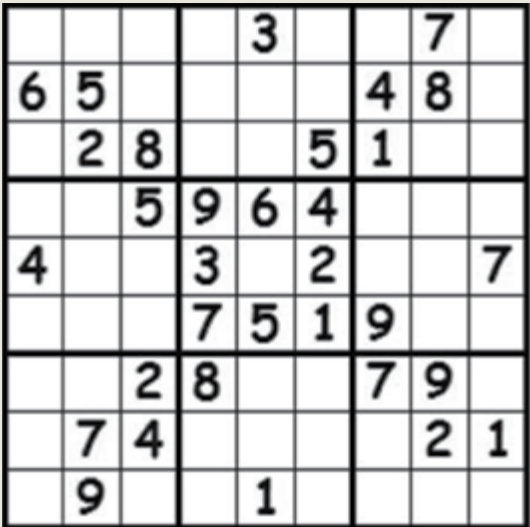
Answers: 1.a 2.b 3.c

KIDS COLOURING



DO YOU SUDOKU?

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



BOGGLER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER



DAILY CROSSWORD ANSWERS (JULY 11)



WORD BUILDER

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

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



SLIPPING STATUS

ENDANGERED HERITAGE SITES

From bleached corals to ‘overtourism’, some UN World Heritage Sites are in danger of being stripped of their status

From Australia’s Great Barrier Reef to the city of Budapest and the watery wonderland that is Venice, several beauty spots risk losing their treasured UN World Heritage status because of environmental damage, excess development or ‘overtourism’.

In a draft report released ahead of a key meeting later this month, the UN’s Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommended Monday a major revamp of the heritage list. Here are some of the sites that risk losing their treasured Heritage Site status, a move that could seriously dent their tourist appeal.



Great Barrier Reef: In danger

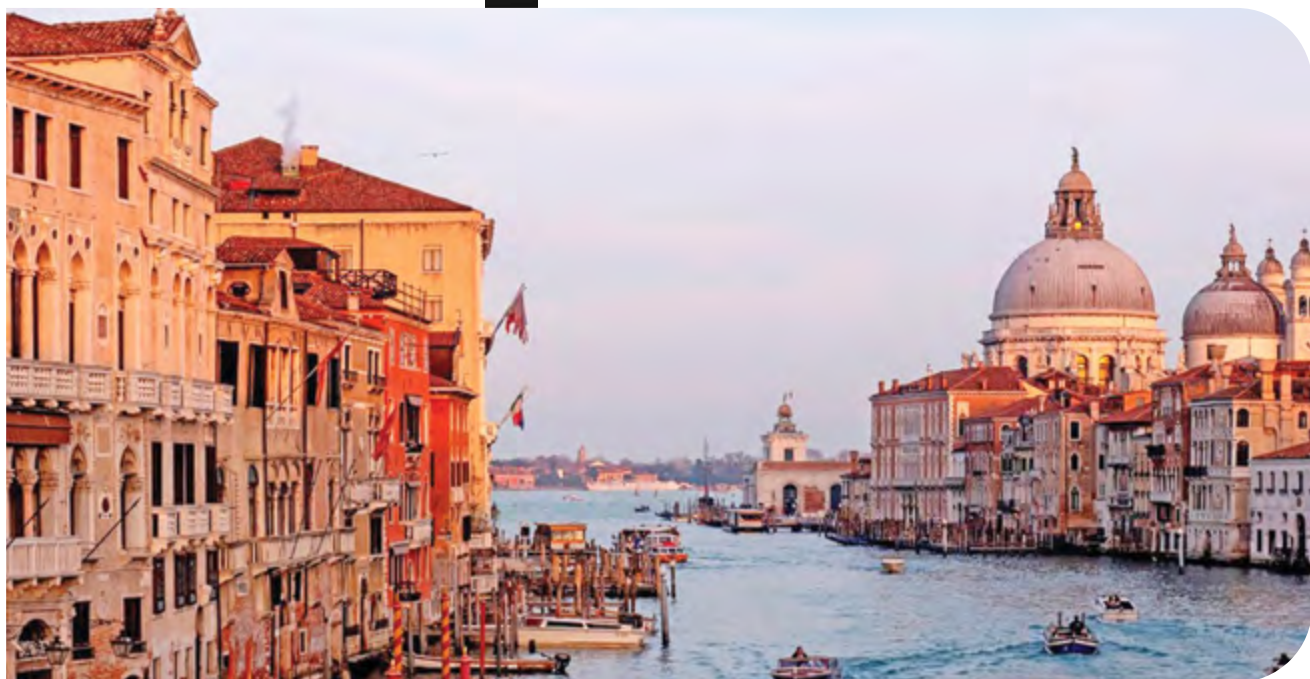
Stretching 2,300km along Australia’s north-east coast, the world’s largest coral reef system, a huge draw for tourists, has been battered by global warming.

In the past five years rising ocean temperatures have caused three episodes of mass coral bleaching, when the invertebrates expel the algae living in their tissues that supply a crucial source of nutrients.

The site, which has also been lashed by cyclones and attacked by crown-of-thorns starfish, has lost half its corals since 1995.

Canberra twice narrowly avoided having UNESCO put the reef on its endangered list, in 2015 and 2017. Four years on, UNESCO acknowledges the government’s efforts to shore up the site but notes that Australia’s own outlook for the ecosystem has been downgraded from ‘poor’ to ‘very poor’.

It recommends adding the reef to its list of sites in danger, a first step towards it being stripped of its World Heritage status.



Venice: In danger

The former city-state of Venice was inscribed on the Heritage list in 1987 as ‘an extraordinary architectural masterpiece in which even the smallest building contains works by some of the world’s greatest artists’. But for years now UNESCO has been echoing warnings by residents’ groups about the damage caused by overtourism, saying it is driving an exodus from the city.

While noting that tourist numbers drastically decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic, UNESCO said the health crisis “also highlighted the need for more sustainable tourism management and the development of a more diverse resilient economic basis.”

It also noted that although Venice recently banned giant cruise ships from docking inside the city centre at UNESCO’s request, it has no practical effect, as no alternative exists for the mooring of these large ships. It proposes, therefore, to also add Venice to its endangered heritage list.

Liverpool: Faces delisting

Liverpool played a major role in Britain’s emergence as a pre-eminent trading power in the 18th and 19th centuries, with its port serving as a hub for the mass movement of people and goods between Europe and America. But the redevelopment of its historic waterfront and northern dock area have landed it in hot water with UNESCO.

The agency has chided the city for failing to cap the heights for new buildings and said that plans for a new football stadium in Bramley-Moore Dock will lead to a further deterioration of the waterfront’s outstanding universal value.

As warnings have gone unheeded, UNESCO recommends taking Liverpool off the World Heritage list altogether. Stretching 2,300km along Australia’s northeast coast, the world’s largest coral reef system, a huge draw for tourists, has been battered by global warming. In last five years, rising ocean temperatures have caused three episodes of mass coral bleaching.



Tanzania game reserve: Faces delisting

Selous Game Reserve gained World Heritage status in 1982 as one of the biggest remaining wilderness expanses in Africa, teeming with wildlife, including elephants and black rhinos. But in 2014, it was downgraded to the endangered heritage list as poachers began to decimate the elephant population.

The UN has also expressed alarm over the sale of logging rights inside the reserve as well as more recent plans for the construction of a dam on the Rufiji river, the country’s largest.

Lamenting Tanzania’s decision to forge ahead with the project, despite the ecological threat to the floodplain, UNESCO says the reserve’s outstanding character has suffered irreversible damage and recommended that it be taken off the World Heritage list.



Budapest: In danger

The central European city on the Danube, which was conquered by the Turks and destroyed during World War II, won its UN listing as an outstanding example of urban development. But it now risks being delisted over a major renovation of the Buda Castle quarter, aimed at restoring it to its pre-World War II glory.

UNESCO argues that the reconstruction flouts international conservation norms and called for the work be halted. The body said that the works are driven mainly by ideological considerations aimed at promoting Hungary’s pre-Communist national identity, and go beyond the minimal intervention recommended for historical monuments. As a result it has called for Budapest to be placed on the endangered list.

AFP

BIG WIN FOR BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH VS ZIMBABWE ONE-OFF TEST: DAY FIVE

Harare, Zimbabwe - Bangladesh beat Zimbabwe by 220 runs in the one-off Test in Harare on Sunday, the visitors' patience paying off after the hosts' nightwatchman Donald Tiripano led a rearguard action with his 144-ball 52. Zimbabwe's last three wickets took up 34.4 overs, but they had lost four wickets in 19 balls in the day's first session.

The victory - Bangladesh's fifth overseas win overall - capped off a fine farewell for man of the match Mahmudullah, who announced his retirement from Tests on the third day of the game. At the start of play on Sunday, the team gave Mahmudullah a guard of honour and captain Mominul Haque let him lead the team out onto the ground. After being a last-minute inclusion in the XI, Mahmudullah rescued Bangladesh with a first-innings 150 at No 8. He added 191 runs for the ninth wicket with Taskin Ahmed, who made a career-best 75.

The eventuality of the Test was decided when Mehidy Hasan Miraz removed Richard Ngarava to finish with match figures of nine for 148, the best returns in an overseas Test by a Bangladeshi bowler. Taskin also took his career-best innings figures of four for 82 in Bangladesh's second dig.

On the final day, Dion Myers and Tiripano put up a resistance that lasted 17 overs, but the visitors bounced back with a four-wicket burst that signaled a swifter finish to the Test match.

Tiripano found willing allies in Victor Nyauchi and Blessing



Mehidy Hasan Miraz
4
WICKETS
66 RUNS

Muzarabani, who had a hilarious duel with Taskin, giving back the little jig that the Bangladeshi had done on him on the second day. Nuyachi was caught at slip, fending a Taskin bouncer while Ebadat Hossain removed Tiripano for his only wicket in the match.

Miraz, however, eventually removed Myers and Timycen Maruma in the same over before Taskin took the wickets of Roy Kaia and Regis Chakabva as Zimbabwe's middle-order collapsed. Bangladesh had staged a spirited fightback in the first innings, before Shakib and Miraz ensured a big lead with their combined nine-wicket haul. Cricinfo

SCOREBOARD

Bangladesh 1 st Innings 468		
Zimbabwe 1 st Innings 276		
Bangladesh 2 nd Innings 284 for one decl		
ZIMBABWE 2nd INNINGS		
M Shumba	c sub (Yasir Ali)	11
T Kaitano	b T Ahmed	7
B Taylor	lbw b Shakib al Hasan	92
D Myers	c & b Miraz	26
T Tiripano	c Islam b Miraz	52
T Maruma	c Das b E Hossain	0
R Kaia	lbw b T Ahmed	0
R Chakabva	b T Ahmed	1
V Nyauchi	c Shakib b T Ahmed	10
B Muzarabani	not out	30
R Ngarava	b Miraz	10
Extras:	(b 5, lb 11, nb 1)	17
TOTAL:	256 in 94.4 overs	
Fall of wickets: 1-15, 2-110, 3-132, 4-159, 5-159, 6-160, 7-164, 8-198, 9-239, 10-256		
Bowling: Shakib al Hasan 25-9-44-1, M H Miraz 30.4-10-66-4, T Ahmed 24-4-82-4, E Hossain 11-2-39-1, Mahmudullah 4-0-9-0		

Hetmyer powers WI to victory

WEST INDIES VS AUSTRALIA SECOND T20I

Gros-Islet, Saint Lucia - Shimron Hetmyer led a formidable West Indies batting effort on the way to a comfortable 56-run victory and a 2-0 lead over Australia in the second T20I of their five-match series at the Daren Sammy Stadium in St Lucia on Saturday.

Hetmyer's 61 off 36 balls with four sixes and two fours paced the home side to 196 for four after they were sent in to bat yet again by visiting captain Aaron Finch.

He received excellent support from veteran allrounder Dwayne Bravo, who contributed an unbeaten 47 to a 103-run fourth-wicket partnership while Andre Russell crashed 24 not out off only eight deliveries to leave the Aussies with a much tougher task than in the first match a day earlier when they had limited



Shimron Hetmyer
61
36 BALLS

their opponents to 145 for six.

Australia's pursuit of that daunting target stuttered from the start with the loss of

Matthew Wade to the second ball of their chase and despite a second consecutive half-century from Mitchell Marsh, they fell

well short in being dismissed for 140.

Leg-spinner Hayden Walsh grabbed three wickets for the second night in a row with the tourists' lower-order crumbling in a heap yet again to leave them in a must-win situation going into the third match on Monday at the same venue.

This is the sixth time in the last seven T20 matches when they have chased that Australia have lost, and in losing their last seven wickets for just 39 runs, they repeated the indiscretions and poor shot-selection which triggered their capitulation in the series-opener.

Brief scores: West Indies: 196 for four in 20 overs (Shimron Hetmyer 61, Dwayne Bravo 47 n.o.) beat Australia 140 in 19.2 overs (Mitchell Marsh 54; Hayden Walsh 3-29, Sheldon Cottrell 2-22).

AFP

Gregory stars as England clinch series

ENGLAND VS PAKISTAN SECOND ODI

London, UK - Lewis Gregory starred with both bat and ball as England beat Pakistan by 52 runs in the second one-day international (ODI) at Lord's on Saturday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in a three-match series.

Set 248 to win in a game reduced to 47 overs per side by rain, Pakistan were dismissed for 195. Somerset pace-bowling allrounder Gregory, in just his second match at this level, struck with his first ball on Saturday on the way to three for 44 as England won with six overs to spare.

That followed his valuable 40 and an eighth-wicket stand of 69 with Brydon Carse (31), in a maiden ODI innings for both



Lewis Gregory
40
47 balls

batsmen, after England had slumped to 160 for seven.

Gregory, reflecting on his shock call-up after a COVID-19 crisis ruled out England's entire originally selected squad, said, "It's a fantastic opportunity for

the lads, a few guys are showing what they're capable of and (playing) in front of a big crowd here at the 'Home of Cricket' is pretty special."

England were set for a big total while Phil Salt (60) and

James Vince (56) were sharing a third-wicket partnership of 97 after Dawid Malan and Zak Crawley had both fallen

for ducks. From 118 for two, however, England slumped to 160 for seven. But even though Pakistan fast bowler Hasan Ali took five for 51, England had more than enough runs.

Brief scores: England: 247 for five in 45.2 overs (Phil Salt 60, James Vince 56, Lewis Gregory 40; Hasan Ali 5-51, Haris Rauf 2-54) beat Pakistan 195 in 41 overs (Saud Shakeel 56, Hasan Ali 31; Gregory 3-44, Craig Overton 2-39, Saqib Mahmood 2-21).

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Argentina's Lionel Messi holds the trophy as he celebrates on the podium with teammates after winning the 2021 Copa America final against Brazil at Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro, on Saturday

ARGENTINA BEAT BRAZIL FOR TITLE

Di Maria's goal gives narrow win in Copa America final

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - Superstar Lionel Messi won his first trophy with his national team as Angel Di Maria's goal gave Argentina a 1-0 win over hosts Brazil in the Copa America final on Saturday.

The victory at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium ended Argentina's 28-year wait for a major trophy, and also ended Brazil's unbeaten home record that stretched back more than 2,500 days.

Argentina had last tasted success at a major tournament in 1993 when the great Gabriel Batistuta's brace gave them a 2-1 win over Mexico in the Copa final in Ecuador.

"It's a great title, especially for our people. The fans support the team unconditionally. I think they

can identify with this team that never gives in," said Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni.

It was the first time in six editions playing at home that Brazil had failed to lift the trophy.

And while 34 year old Messi's odyssey has come to an end, Brazil's Neymar, five years his junior, is still without a major title at international level having missed the Selecao's win on home soil two years ago through injury. Argentina edged a brutal and fractious affair thanks to Di Maria's goal on 22 minutes.

The 33 year old winger ran onto Rodrigo De Paul's sumptuous through ball to lob Brazil goalkeeper Ederson with a first time finish. "We fell short so many times, we dreamt so much

about this, fought so hard," said Di Maria, who was named man of the match.

"We have to be big enough to recognise (the defeat) regardless of how painful and difficult it is," said Brazil coach Tite.

Di Maria the tormentor

In a frantic start, Argentina's burly enforcer Nicolas Otamendi was quickly in with his first foul while Brazilian midfielder Fred picked up the first booking after just three minutes for a studs up lunge at Gonzalo Montiel.

The final was the first match of the tournament, which was originally due to take place last year, to allow in fans as

7,800 - a tenth of the Maracana capacity - took their seats after authorities partially lifted pandemic restrictions.

The brutal nature of the early challenges could be seen on the players' kits, with Neymar sporting ripped shorts and Lucas Paqueta being left with a hole in his sock following an intervention by Otamendi.

Argentina played with aggression and commitment, but no lack of quality with Di Maria tormenting Brazil's left back Renan Lodi, who probably should have cut out De Paul's pass for the winger's goal. Di Maria had a shot from 20 yards blocked while

Messi fired just wide following a 40 yard run. Increasingly it descended into a fractious, niggly affair

with little fluid play between fouls and a plethora of theatrics and petulant bickering. It was playing into Argentina's hands as they looked to run down the clock and hold onto their slender lead.

"Only one team wanted to play. It's a trap we knew about. That's not an excuse," complained Brazil captain Thiago Silva. "It's difficult to play such a stop-start match."

Brazil managed to up the pressure again at the end of the half but they lacked a killer touch against some full-blooded defending - Montiel even finished the game with his white sock soaked in blood.

Messi slipped embarrassingly late on with a chance to clinch victory but it mattered little as moments later his teammates were tossing him in the air to celebrate their win.

AFF

Messi's Argentina trophy odyssey ends in Brazil

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil - When Lionel Messi, already a regular starter for the mighty Barcelona, made his international bow in 2005 as an 18 year old for a powerful Argentina side he surely never imagined it would take him 16 years to finally claim a trophy with his country.

But the six time Ballon d'Or winner had to suffer numerous disappointments, including losing four finals, before leading his country to victory over 'eternal rivals' Brazil in the Copa America final on Saturday.

Despite a glittering career that has seen him help Barcelona to win the Champions League four times, La Liga ten times and the Copa Del Rey seven times, Messi's hopes of matching that with international success were repeatedly frustrated.

In truth he wasn't as inspired in the final as throughout the tournament, even slipping over when clean through two minutes from time and facing Brazil's goalkeeper Ederson with a chance to finish the match.

But the way his teammates threw him into the air after the final whistle showed how important and appreciated he is within the Argentina camp.

"It was my dream. It was what I wanted most in the world," said Argentina goal-

keeper Emiliano Martinez following the triumph. "We gave it to Messi, who deserved it the most."

Three times previously - in 2007, 2015 and 2016 - his Argentina lost in the final at the Copa while they were also defeated 0-1 by Germany in the 2014 World Cup final at the Maracana.

History would not repeat itself this time around as Messi not only inspired his side but also finished the tournament as top goalscorer and with the most assists.

He was named player of the tournament, during which Messi equalled and then broke Javier Mascherano's record of 147 caps for Argentina, setting a new mark of 151 on Saturday.

His four goals during the competition took him to 76 for his country, just one off all-time South American mark set by Pele for Brazil.

While he had been unable to replicate his club success at country level, Messi's never stopped trying and has always led Argentina by example.

Having won Olympic gold with Argentina's U23 side in Beijing in 2008, and been world U20 champion with his country three years before that, Messi finally has the senior title he's craved for so long.

AFF



Argentina's Lionel Messi is tossed in the air by teammates after winning the Copa America final against Brazil on Saturday

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2011: **URUGUAY**
2007: **BRAZIL**
2004: **BRAZIL**
2001: **COLOMBIA**
1999: **BRAZIL**
1997: **BRAZIL**
1995: **URUGUAY**
1993: **ARGENTINA**

MOST TITLES



15
Uruguay, Argentina



9
Brazil



2
Chile, Paraguay, Peru



**NOVAK
DJOKOVIC**
AUSTRALIAN OPEN: 9
(2008, 2011, 2012, 2013,
2015, 2016, 2019, 2020, 2021)
FRENCH OPEN: 2
(2016, 2021)
WIMBLEDON: 6
(2011, 2014, 2015, 2018,
2019, 2021)
US OPEN: 3
(2011, 2015, 2018)

Serbia's Novak Djokovic kisses the winner's trophy after beating Italy's Matteo Berrettini in the men's singles final on the 2021 Wimbledon Championships on Sunday (AFP)

IT'S SLAM NO 20 FOR DJOKOVIC

Serbia's world No 1 claims record-equalling Grand Slam and sixth Wimbledon crown

London, UK - Novak Djokovic won a record-equalling 20th Grand Slam title and sixth Wimbledon on Sunday with a four-set victory over battling Matteo Berrettini of Italy.

The world No 1 triumphed 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 to move level on 20 majors with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. His win also put him three-quarters of the way to the first calendar Grand Slam of all four majors since 1969.

A sixth victory at the All England Club for Djokovic, who was playing in his 30th final at the Slams, added to his nine Australian Opens, two Roland Garros titles as well as three at the US Open.

Should he win a fourth title in

New York in September, he will become just the third man in history after Don Budge (1938) and Rod Laver (1962 and 1969) to complete the calendar Grand Slam. "I could definitely envisage that happening and I hope I will give it a shot," said Djokovic after receiving the trophy.

"I'm in great form and played well and having my best form at Grand Slams is my No 1 priority." Djokovic paid a handsome tribute to Federer - who went out in the quarterfinals - and Nadal, who did not play so he could prolong his career. "It means none of us three will stop!" he joked about all three being tied on 20.

"Roger and Rafa are legends they are the reason I am where I am today."

The Serb also now has 85 career titles while he has become the first man to break the US\$150mn prize money barrier.

A gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics could give him the first ever Golden Grand Slam by a men's player.

Djokovic overcame a nervy start to break for 3-1, which he stretched to 5-2.

He even had a set point in a marathon eighth game which the Italian saved after eight deuces.

Reinvigorated, he broke Djokovic when he served for the set and then dominated the tie-breaker which he sealed with his fourth ace of the contest.

The top seed stormed to a 5-1 lead in the second set on the back of a double break.

Berrettini, bidding to be Italy's first men's Grand Slam winner since Adriano Panatta at the 1976 French Open, clawed his

way back to 4-5, saving three set points, but Djokovic this time served it out for a set apiece.

Djokovic struck first again for a 2-1 lead in the third set and fought off three break points in the sixth game, a show of defiance which brought watching Hollywood star Tom Cruise to his feet. That was Berrettini's last chance of the set as Djokovic served it out in the tenth game.

A weary Berrettini then served up a double fault on break point to hand Djokovic a 4-3 lead in the fourth set.

Djokovic kept coming, sprinting from the back of the court to pull off a wondrous pick-up and he held on for 5-3.

Berrettini, hoping to be Italy's first singles champion at Wimbledon, saved two championship points in the eighth game. But he was powerless on the third as Djokovic swept to his

place in history. "It was more than a battle. He is a true Italian hammer I felt it on my skin," said Djokovic of Berrettini.

The Italian said, "Novak is a great champion he is writing history on this court. "It is not the end it is the beginning for me.

"Without my family, friends and team all this would not have been possible so I just say Grazie Grazie."

Mektic-Pavic win men's doubles title

Croatia's Nikola Mektic and Mate Pavic won the men's doubles title on Saturday with a 6-4, 7-6 (7/5), 2-6, 7-5 victory over Marcel Granollers of Spain and Horacio Zeballos of Argentina.

Also, Taiwan's Hsieh Su-wei won her third Wimbledon women's doubles title when she and Belgian partner Elise Mertens defeated Russia's Elena Vesnina and Veronika Kudermetova 3-6, 7-5, 9-7 in the final.

AFP



Team UAE Emirates' Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia

Pogacar retains overall lead, Kuss wins stage

TOUR DE FRANCE

Andorre-la-Vieille, Andorra - Defending champion Tadej Pogacar survived a torrid day in the saddle as the Tour de France hit the Pyrenees on Sunday, the Slovenian holding on to the overall lead despite constant pressure from a clique of Ineos riders.

The gruelling stage 15 itself was won by American Sepp Kuss of the Jumbo Visma team, who broke on the last of four tough climbs to distance 41 year old Alejandro Valverde, who was second at the finish line of the tax-haven principality of Andorra.

Kuss, a 26 year old Coloradan, became the first American since Tyler Farrar back in 2011 to win a stage on the Tour de France, and his family was present to witness the feat.

"My girlfriend and my family were on the final climb cheering

me on. I'm lost for words," said climb specialist Kuss, whose family has roots in Slovenia.

"It was a hard day in the break, but I know this ride well from training and knew where I could get a break," he said.

Pogacar is perhaps the big winner on the day after he was isolated on the windy slopes of the third climb, but kept his calm and, crucially, pace as his closest rivals took turns to attack him.

Ineos have said they plan to grind him down in a bid to manoeuvre their own rider, Richard Carapaz, into contention for the yellow jersey. The Ecuadorian currently lies fourth, 5min 33sec behind Pogacar.

While Monday is a well-served rest day, Sunday's first Pyrenean stage was the first of four challenges in this secluded mountain range where the 2021 Tour is likely to be decided.

AFP

RECENT MEN'S CHAMPIONS

									
2021 NOVAK DJOKOVIC (Serbia)	2020 Tournament cancelled	2019 DJOKOVIC	2018 DJOKOVIC	2017 ROGER FEDERER (Switzerland)	2016 ANDY MURRAY (Great Britain)	2015 DJOKOVIC	2014 DJOKOVIC	2013 MURRAY	2012 FEDERER

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The heat is on... Bring on the super coolers!



The need for air-conditioning and air cooling systems have never been felt more strongly in this part of the world, than the current summer, when day temperatures have hit an all-time high, and they say, the ‘best’ is yet to come!

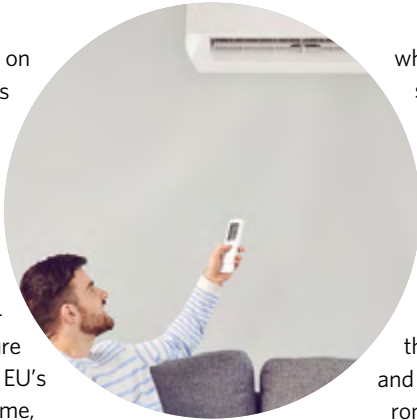
On July 5, Kuwait recorded one of the highest temperature ever on Earth - 53.5°C - in the northern city of Al Jasra. That is more than half way to the boiling point of water and many residents bore the brunt of the mercury’s vengeance in many different ways. If Kuwait was the hottest, neighbouring Iraq and Iran, too, recorded temperatures of 51.6°C and 51.0°C respectively. Oman was also in the race with the temperature in Al Wusta region, also recording 51.6°C on the same day.

The heat wave experienced in Kuwait during June was also reflected in the UAE and Oman, with temperatures hovering near 50°C, though the Norwegian weather monitor Time and Date dubbed Kuwait City and Doha are the hottest capitals in the world. North America, too, experienced

its warmest June on record, according to the EU’s Earth observation programme.

This was also the fourth warmest June ever recorded worldwide and climate experts say the findings point to a frightening escalation in temperature extremes. Copernicus, the EU’s Earth observation programme, produces its figures for world temperatures from computer-generated analyses using billions of measurements from satellites, aircraft and weather stations around the world.

“We are getting used to record high temperatures being recorded somewhere around the world every year now,” says Prof Peter Stott of the UK Met Office, adding that



A house with too much humid air can also have issues with mould and mildew. Moist air provides a good environment for bacteria

what meteorologists find shocking is not that the world is experiencing more heat waves, but that temperature records are increasingly being broken by such large margins.

According to late scientist P O Fanger, an expert in the field of thermal comfort and perception of indoor environment, our perception of comfort mostly depends on our activity, clothing and the properties of our thermal environment. When it comes to hot climates, there are two main ways indoor comfort can be achieved when it’s warm and possibly humid outside.

When people say the temperature within a premise feels ‘close’ (referring to it being dense or stuffy), they are actually

conveying what they feel in a temperature that is loaded with a high amount of water vapour, and there’s less evaporation. These factors combine to create a sensation that the room is too warm and there’s less breathable air, despite the temperature reading on the thermostat.

A house with too much humid air can also have issues with mold and mildew. Moist air can also provide a good environment for bacteria. All are known to adversely affect human health. Excess moisture in the air can take a toll on people, and on furniture, appliances, hardwood floors, and carpeting besides jacking up energy bills.

One can turn to many solutions, from using dehumidifiers that remove moisture from the air, examining appliances like clothes driers and venting systems that transfer water into the air, to switching off exhaust fans and chimneys that redistribute humidity within a home and sealing air leaks that make air-conditioners slog more to cool a room. But the right thing to do is to install energy efficient air conditioners and cooling systems that use green gases and work towards

reducing humidity - the real culprit of our discomfort - and making your premise more comfortable with healthy, bacteria-free, and breathable air.

The choices are varied in Oman and most people are giving up their old air-conditioners to switch to ‘silent’, efficient and cost-effective cooling solutions for their homes and commercial establishments. It is important to have your HVAC unit inspected every year before the heat arrives. If you haven’t yet had the inspection completed, it’s never too late. Also, the recommendation for keeping filters clean or changing them periodically, depending on usage, lays less strain on your unit and helps it function better.

Your thermostat is what tells your air conditioner when to go on and off. If you have a heat-producing appliance next to your thermostat, consider moving it. The heat coming from a lamp, TV, or any other machine will cause your thermostat to activate your AC unit prematurely. Remember, every time you lower your temperature by one degree, a few rials get added to your monthly bill.

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AC market in GCC to record 8% annual growth during 2021-27

The GCC air conditioners market is expected to register an annual average growth rate of around eight per cent over the next seven years, according to a new research report.

With the region's hot and humid weather, the launch of a number of mega projects and upcoming major events in the GCC countries will likely fuel the demand for air conditioners over the forthcoming years.

'Upcoming events in the UAE and Qatar, chiefly the World Expo 2020 (to be held in 2021 due to COVID-19) and the FIFA World Cup 2022, are expected to raise the demand and, consequently, add to the growth of the GCC air conditioners market in the years to come,' said Astute Analytica in its latest report titled 'GCC Air Conditioners Market - Industry Dynamics, Market Size, and Opportunity Forecast to 2027'.

'The GCC air conditioners market is expected to register an annual average growth rate of around eight per cent from 2021 to 2027,' Astute Analytica said in a press release.

Split AC, window AC, portable AC, packaged AC and centralised AC are the main types of air conditioners available in the GCC market.

'Currently, the demand for split AC is higher than other

types of ACs, owing to ease of installation, noise-free functioning and simultaneous cooling of many spaces with multi-split system that lets one outdoor unit support multiple indoor units,' Astute Analytica report said.

The Split AC segment, the report added, is anticipated to remain at the top over the next few years in the GCC. Window ACs are also expected to register a high demand rate in the near future.

Air conditioners find extensive applications in residential, commercial, healthcare, education/institutional, public, government, retail, hospitality, and industrial sectors. Over the years, commercial sector has surfaced as the most prominent end-user of air conditioners in the GCC region. 'Expanding at a significant growth rate, the demand for ACs in the commercial sectors is likely to remain rising over the next few years. In addition, the hospitality industry is anticipated to emerge as a lucrative prospect for market players on the back of proliferating the tourism industry,' the report said.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain are the prominent markets for air conditioners.

Astute Analytica report said that Saudi Arabia is re-



porting a significant rise in the demand for air conditioners. The increasing need for office spaces, thanks to the expanding corporate and residential sectors in the country, is adding to this demand substantially.

'Other countries are also expected to witness a spike in the demand for ACs in near future, mostly due to the surge in the disposable in-

come of consumers that is enabling them to spend over luxurious items,' the report added.

The GCC air conditioners market is marked by intense competition among key players. The leading participants, including Daikin, LG Electronics, Samsung, Hitachi, Panasonic, Electrolux, Haier Electronics, and several others, are aggressively focusing on increasing their visibility

in the market.

'For this, they continue to take up new strategies, such as innovation and new product launches. Apart from new launches, market players are also concentrating on mergers, acquisitions and partnerships to cut out competition and add new products to their portfolios,' the report said.

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Therefore, our message to our clients is short: Ready to defeat all the challenges that you face.

Indoor air quality and smart devices are key heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) trends for 2021. As the young generation engages in developing and adopting new technologies — including online solutions, smart homes, energy efficient buildings, connected devices and automated business systems controls — there is changing market dynamics towards adoption of new advanced HVAC systems.

It is expected that contractors may benefit from attempts by businesses to improve ventilation systems in 2021. According to guidance released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), inadequate ventilation could potentially contribute to an environment where COVID-19 is spread by airborne transmission. This has led to an increase in demand for technologies that improve the quality of indoor air.

Pre-pandemic, many of these technologies such as heavy duty filters and systems that use UV light to kill virus particles were typically only marketed to hospitals and other healthcare settings. However, in 2021 it is likely that there will be a greater focus on indoor air quality from commercial and residential sectors.

Another trend that is expected to see growth in 2021 is the increasing adoption of environmentally friendly and energy saving technologies. Consumers are increasingly aware of their carbon footprints and many will prioritise more sustainable solutions for heating and cooling their homes. This increased focus on sustainable solutions combined with the growing adoption of Internet of Things devices among consumers is expected to drive growth in the connected HVAC sector. Many consumers will expect to be able to control the temperature of their homes and their energy consumption through tools like smart thermostats and connected apps.

Smart and green options

Smart technologies help us stay connected to our environment. Smart appliances become smarter by remembering usage habits to anticipate one's needs. An innovation lies in smart technologies like mobile apps that allow building managers to control HVAC technology from one centralised point. For example, smart thermostats that detect measurements, such as humidity, temperature, and motion. There is a global drive for greener options, focused on developing new and sustainable innovations, increased energy efficiency, substituting

Key HVAC trends to look out for in 2021



hazardous substances, minimising noise and vibration, and reducing CO₂ emissions.

Solar HVAC solutions in the field of sustainable energy can be used for both heating and cooling, making them an attractive option as 'go green'.

A HVAC trend like inverter compressor solves inefficiencies and noise problems, resulting in an air conditioner that cools faster, lasts longer, and runs quieter. It has a unique power saving operation range frequency that saves more energy. This, paired with Ioniser technology, removes harmful substances and odours surrounding the unit, resulting in fresher air supply.

Filtration strategy trend uses antibacterial air

Pre-pandemic, many of these technologies such as heavy duty filters and systems that use UV light to kill virus particles were typically only marketed to hospitals and other healthcare settings

filter filtration systems, to protect users from all harmful substances, including odour, bacteria, allergen, virus, micro-dust, etc. And, when used with Plasmaster Ioniser, offers protection with over three million ions sterilising the air passing through the air conditioner, as well as surrounding surfaces, for a safer, cleaner environment.

Internet of Things

Internet of Things has joined home HVAC systems with the help of smart thermostats manufactured by Nest, Honeywell, Ecobee and Emerson. These devices connect to smartphones and tablets, allowing homeowners to control their heating and cooling systems from anywhere in the world. The thermostats can au-

tomatically adjust to suit homeowner's personal preferences, notify them maintenance issues, help monitor and reduce energy consumption over time. Digitisation of the companies' via e-commerce and iOS/Android-enabled apps, supported by a database of product information, continues to see momentum. The companies, in order to expand market share, are bound to actively pursue acquisitions to broaden their product portfolio. With a growing number of Wi-Fi-enabled household appliances, it's estimated that more than 14mn homes in US use smart home devices and products — and that number is expected to go up; also, researching and possibly stocking products help reduce customers' carbon footprint.

Mobile technology for fleets

Mobile technology is a success for fleets. Today's fleets facing pressure on multiple fronts need to not just survive, but to thrive. And, mobile technology as key is a way to build intelligent, efficient, and scalable fleets that exceed requirements and expedite their organizations' digital transformation process.

Encouraging clients to a future, shaped by growth — Frost & Sullivan recently gathered thought leaders from across the trucking industry — to participate in a virtual think tank discussion about the solutions they're implementing, the challenges they're neutralising, and the lessons they're learning along the way. Outcome pointed that businesses should benchmark against these shared insights and use this summary to strategise, navigate change, and improve performance.

Mobile technology with features such as introduction of faster cellular data networks, GPS, smartphones and tablets, helped make mobilisation available and affordable to fleets of every size. Thought leaders are utilising mobile technology in multiple and varied ways. Examples include: Enabling ELD (electronic logging device) solutions; providing near-real-time navigation, mapping, geo-fencing and dynamic routing; moving information and reports from paper to the mobile device; monitoring vehicle performance and maintenance; tracking shipments; implementing video safety solutions and enriching driver communications tools.

As the COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated, building flexibility into solutions and planning help adapt quickly and correctly to unforeseen circumstances.

GENERAL – NEW HIGH ENERGY EFFICIENCY (HI-EER) ACS



The Air Conditioning Division of Khimji Ramdas (ACD) has been in relentless service to the people of Oman, providing professional air conditioning solutions

Over 40 years the customers have relied upon 'General Air Conditioners' in Oman to effectively deal with extreme temperatures. Brand 'General' of Fujitsu General Japan bound by the commitment to deliver excellence has been offering products which epitomise unmatched quality, design and performance. Continuous R & D and innovation have enabled the manufacturers to equip the products with unique features that ensure strong performance and durability. Over the years it has earned a unique position for itself as the most durable AC, delivering unequalled cooling in most adverse climatic conditions as in the Middle East.

The brand also stands for its commitment to be environment friendly and offers many products capable of immense power savings and using environment friendly refrigerants. These are some of the considerations why customers prefer to pay a pre-

mium for 'General' ACs over many other brands as the value for money offsets the price factor. This is demonstrated by the fact that 'General' has the largest installed base in Oman, with some Acs working to capacity even after a whopping 30 years of service.

The range includes state of the art Variable Refrigerant Flow (VRF) systems, Ducted splits, Cassettes, Wall Mounted Splits and Window Air Conditioners. The brand also complies with Environment standards as they use environment friendly gases. Fulfilling its commitment to Energy Efficiency solutions 'General' offers range of ACs with high Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) complying to Oman's prescribed Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS). These machines are designed to offer great durability, performance and value for money. Characterised by a unique blend of environment friendliness and robust performance the ACs ushers in a new experience of comfort to customers.

As commercial requirements go beyond the 'cooling' requirement alone, the Sales & Design

Team in KR ACD is able to offer complete HVAC solutions with focus on Energy Efficiency, Environment Friendliness and Indoor Air Quality. It is a one-stop-shop for discerning customers from design to after sales service & maintenance.

All these products & services are available through a strong sales & service network present in almost all locations to reach valuable customers through the length & breadth of Oman.

The customers' confidence in reinforced by an efficient After Sales Service. KR provides 24 x 7 complaint logging facility for the customers to register their complaints. In order to provide prompt and efficient services KR ACD has a fleet of about 20 mobile service stations branded as 'Siyana Wa Khidmaat' across Oman. Customers get their service needs fulfilled at their doorsteps without the need of having to transport their ACs to workshops. The network of service stations across the country helps to maintain a large population of ACs through Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMCs). For enquiries please contact — acd.sales@kr.om

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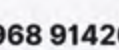
In the cooled environment, study participants performed a set of simple mental tasks under ei-

Furthermore, face temperature significantly declined when the air was directed at the participants face unlike under indirect airflow.

Sustainable Retrofits: Transformative Wave has developed a new generation of sustainable retrofit technology known as 'Catalyst' that installs directly into existing rooftop units, with the features — economisers, variable fan speeds, demand-response ventilation, smart controls and automated capabilities — lead to

Motor efficiency in HVACs: The technology trends focused on increasing efficiency of motors can bring savings in the HVAC applications involving motors. Since efficiency causes less excess heat, it results into increased life-cycle of components. Over 50% of Earth's total electricity consumption is used for operating motors and motor systems. The latest and trending technology will improve the future of motors in HVAC.


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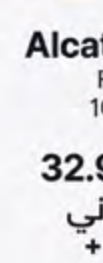






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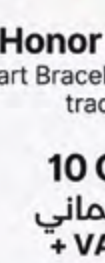
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