

30 new fuel filling stations

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 30 usufruct agreements to build fuel filling stations in different sites in the governorates of Oman to the tune of RO 5.6 million. The stations have a total area of 101,842 square metres. The initiative seeks to achieve fiscal sustainability, attract investments, boost government revenues and encourage the local community to engage in business activities. **DETAILS ON P2**



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'SCARED'
OSAKA
ADVANCES IN
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COMMODITIES
DROP ON THE
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GROWTH OUTLOOK

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LEBANON'S PAST
ECHOES ITS GRIM
PRESENT IN
EXHIBITION

MUSCAT

HM GREETINGS TO ARMENIA PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President Vahagn Khachaturyan of the Republic of Armenia, on his country's Independence Anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Khachaturyan. His Majesty also wished the people of Armenia further progress and prosperity.

HM GREETINGS TO MALTA PRESIDENT

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to President George Vella of the Republic of Malta, on his country's Independence Anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere sentiments and best wishes to President Vella and the people of his country further progress and prosperity. — ONA

HM GREET'S BELIZE GOVERNOR GENERAL

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to Froyla Tzalam, Governor General of Belize, on her country's Independence Anniversary. In his cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt sentiments and best wishes to Governor General Froyla and the people of her country. — ONA



INSIDE



TUNISIA POLICE DETAIN FORMER PRIME MINISTER



BRITAIN LOOKS TO FUTURE AFTER QUEEN'S FUNERAL

Elderly enjoy special status in Omani society, says official

GENEVA: The Sultanate of Oman welcomed the report of the Human Rights Council's expert tasked with monitoring the rights of elderly people worldwide. First Secretary Sarah al Balushi, member of the Omani Permanent Mission at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, said in a speech

before the Human Rights Council that the elderly enjoy special status in Omani society, since they constitute the core component of families, as well as the community's innate social, cultural and religious repertory. She pointed out that the family care model in Oman stems from

deep-rooted values enshrined in Arab and Islamic culture embraced by generations of citizens. SOCIAL CARE HOME Omani government exerts extensive efforts to provide necessary support for elderly people who lack relatives. It provided social,

health, psychological care and entertainment through programme offered by the Social Care Home, said Sarah al Balushi. She added that these services are provided within the context of the National Geriatric Care Programme conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health

and Omani Association for Elderly Friends. The Omani official touched on aspects of cooperation with the Human Rights Council, which, she said, provides training for caretakers attending the elderly and ensuring that they enjoy their full rights. — ONA

Document authentication services at Oman Post offices

MUSCAT: Acting in cooperation with Oman Post, the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday launched document attestation services in different governorates of Oman. Mohammed bin Nasser al Wahaibi, Under-Secretary for Administrative and Financial Affairs, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the project starts at Oman Post headquarters at Airport Heights in the Governorate of Muscat, and will later be implemented in all Oman Post branches in other governorates. The services include attesting educational certificates, medical certificates, certificates of corporate project plans, certificates on military equipment usage and death certificates, as well as attestation of agencies, contracts, commercial invoices and contracts and

civil certificates, Al Wahaibi added. The beneficiaries can complete consular procedures by ratifying documents related to other government or private agencies, in addition to services of embassies accredited in Oman, said Al Wahaibi. This will save time and efforts, he added, noting that Oman Post offices will apply certain charges for these services. The Foreign Ministry and Oman Post have an understanding on services rendered to beneficiaries wishing to avail quality, value-added transactions through the Door-to-Door System (without having to visit Oman Post branches) or finalise some transactions related to embassies in Oman. Al Wahaibi said that these additional and quality services will be offered at competitive prices upon the request of the beneficiaries. **TURN TO P2**

Pact inked for Muttrah Square project handover

IN RESPONSE TO ROYAL ORDERS

MUSCAT: In response to the Royal orders of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, entrusting Muscat Municipality for the implementation of the Muttrah Square project, winner of the first prize of the Bilarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design, an agreement was signed whereby the project will be handed over to the municipality. Sayyid Saud bin Hilal al Busaidy, Governor of Muscat, presided over the signing ceremony which was held at Al Wahat Club, on Tuesday. The signing of the memorandum underscores the Award's vision towards implementing the project on the ground and tapping the youths' potentials by turning their projects and designs into reality thus shaping civilisational landmarks that serve all society segments and adding aesthetic touches to the selected locations. Speaking on the occasion, Ahmed bin Issa al Shukaili, member of the main committee of the award, expressed his thanks and appreciation for His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for supporting the Bilarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design. He added



that the attention and keenness His Highness Sayyid Bilarab bin Haitham al Said accorded to the award has had a profound effect on the success of the first edition of the award. The signing of the memorandum for the project handover is a testament to the success of the Bilarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design, commending the municipality's cooperation and efforts it undertook to make the award successful and to implement the project on the ground. Dr Suhail bin Salim al Shanfari,

Director of media department at Muscat Municipality, affirmed that the municipality supports the innovative designs and projects of the Omani youth. He added that the construction of Muttrah Square project would add more beauty to the iconic waterfront in Muttrah. Once completed, the project is going to become a unique engineering landmark and a major tourist attraction in Muscat Governorate. He noted that the Muscat Municipality will oversee the project until its completion. — ONA **SEE ALSO P2**

ADVENTURE TOURISM TO GET A BOOST



The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, Omran Group and Visit Oman platform will organise 'Oman Tourism Forum' on September 27. The two-day forum will spotlight on adventure tourism and will focus on best practices in the field of adventure tourism and the most prominent initiatives implemented to improve the efforts of Oman in this field. **DETAILS ON P3**

Plan to equip 10,000 with digital skills

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, Sept 20

Within the framework of activities marking 'Muscat - The Arab Capital 2022', the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, represented by the Directorate General for Stimulating Future Skills, inaugurated on Tuesday the National Initiative to Qualify Digital Competencies (Makeen).

The initiative seeks to qualify national cadres with employable skills in communications and information technology, thereby enabling them to pursue rewarding livelihoods in Oman's digital sector. The programme, envisioned as part of the ministry's objectives in the 10th Five-Year Plan, will be delivered through partnership with educational institutions specialising in the ICT sector. **DETAILS ON P13**



SMEs can apply for Creative Industries Incubator

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

The Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises (ASMED) announced registration for Creative Industries Incubator in a strategic partnership with the Youth Center.

The move aims to boost young people's creativity and channel their energies in the right direction.

The creative industries have a promising economic outlook and constitute a major pillar of innovation. The Creative Industries Incubator programme has a highly competitive advantage. The economic activities here are in line with the priorities of Oman Vision 2040.

The Authority called on small and medium enterprises and those with innovative ideas in the field to register in the Creative Industries Incubator via an electronic link that has been published on the Authority's social media platforms.

In his comments to Oman

The Authority will provide a set of programmes and services such as guidance, counselling, and specialised and general consultations, within an integrated programme in cooperation with the public and private sectors

ABDULLAH AL SUNAIDY
Director of Entrepreneurship Department

Observer, Abdullah al Sunaidy, Director of Entrepreneurship Department, said, "The Creative Industries Incubator focuses on areas of highly competitive advantage that keep pace with global trends in the creative industries sector. The Authority will provide a set of programmes

and services such as guidance, counselling, and specialised and general consultations, within an integrated programme in cooperation with the public and private sectors."

The initiative, which is one of the economic stimulus initiatives announced by the Authority in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy in August 2022, aims to empower institutions in this field, create a group of emerging companies with high technical and administrative capabilities in the field of creative industries, provide technical support and the necessary services that institutions need through guidance and counselling, as well as contribute to creating job opportunities through the development of the creative industries sector.

It targets 30 small and medium enterprises in the creative industries. The incubator provides office space, consultancy, guidance and training, and the resources and services necessary for the establishment and growth of the

project.

The programme will be operated from Youth Center headquarters in the Governorate of Muscat. The Youth Centre is to provide an integrated innovative youth space to support young people's creative and pioneering thoughts.

It also aims to fulfil the aspirations of young people that contribute to developing their talent and skills.

Creative Industries include arts and culture, design, publishing and media, electronic games, performing arts, films and videos.

Such initiatives stimulate economic activity in partnership with the private sector and support the role of small and medium enterprises.

These initiatives have a huge development outlook for micro, small and medium enterprises registered with the Authority in the Sultanate of Oman. At the end of last July, the number of SMEs rose by 47 per cent to reach 81,460 institutions.



Belarab Architectural Design Award project



The agreement to implement Maidan Muttrah (Muttrah square) project, which won first place in the Belarab bin Haitham Award for Architectural Design was signed in Muscat on Tuesday. The ceremony was held under the auspices of Sayyid Saud bin Hilal Al Busaidy, Governor of Muscat in the presence of Sayyid Said bin Sultan al Busaidy, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth for Culture and Ahmed bin Mohammed al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality. — ONA



Document authentication services at Oman Post offices

FROM PAGE2

The value of the fee charged against consular services at the Foreign Ministry will remain unchanged, he said. The ministry's offices will remain available during the transitional phase for one full year from the start of the authentication services to evaluate the experience and address any issues that may arise or tackle aspects that may require a change in procedures.

Al Wahaibi spoke about another partnership with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn). The Foreign Ministry will continue to provide authentication/certification services for companies and investors within the borders of industrial estates in different wilayats of Oman, with the prime aim of streamlining procedures and enhancing investment in Oman. — ONA



Pact for 30 new fuel filling stations

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 30 usufruct agreements to build fuel filling stations in different sites in the governorates of Oman to the tune of RO 5.6 million. The stations have a total area of 101,842 square metres. The initiative seeks to achieve fiscal sustainability, attract investments, boost government revenues and encourage the local community to engage in business activities.

The agreements were signed by Eng Hamad bin Ali al Nazwani, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning for Housing, and representatives of the filling stations. The filling stations are distributed as follows: 7 in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate, 6 in Dhofar Governorate, 6 in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, 4 in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, 3 in Muscat Governorate, 2 in Al Dhahirah Governorate, 1 in Al Buraimi Governorate and 1 in South Al Batinah Governorate. — ONA

Refineries' sales increase 6% in July

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's refineries sales increased by 18.6 per cent by the end of July 2022 compared to the same period in 2021, according to the latest data issued by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The production of (M-95) automobile fuel stood at 9,258,500 barrels, comprising a rise by 11.8 per cent compared to the same period in 2021. Sales of M-95 automobile fuel increased by 0.7 per cent to reach 7,239,600 barrels, while its exports surged by 93.1 per cent to reach 2,745,900 barrels.

The production of standard grade petrol (M-91) increased by 1.7 per cent to stand at 7,562,600 barrels compared to July 2021. Sales of M-91 petrol reached 7,235,900 barrels, comprising a rise by 54.9 per cent, while its exports went down by 69.8 per cent to reach

930,100 barrels.

Gas oil (diesel) output during July 2022 fell by 14.1 per cent compared to the same period in 2021 to stand at 18,220,900 barrels. Sales of diesel stood at 8,366,600 barrels, constituting a rise of 9 per cent, while its exports dropped by 29 per cent compared to the same period in 2021 to reach 9,423,000 barrels.

As far as petrochemicals are concerned, exports and production of polypropylene grew by 46.5 per cent and 19.7 per cent respectively, while its sales went down by 39.3 per cent.

Meanwhile, the production and exports of benzene fell by 79.1 per cent and 78.4 per cent respectively, by the end of July 2022. The production and exports of paraxylene also declined by 94.8 per cent and 93.3 per cent respectively, by the end of July 2022. — ONA



Tender

مدائن
madayn

The Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) announces the following Tender:

Tender Number	Tender Name	Last date of Buying	Date of Submission	Type of Work	Register Degree	Fee (R.O)
5/2022/PEIE/HQ-5	INDUSTRIAL SURVEY	04-10-2022	30-10-2022 (12:00 PM)	SPECIALIZED COMPANIES	ALL	25

Tender Documents can be obtained from Accounts Department at Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM) (Tel: 24155428/24155474) during official working hours, against non-refundable fee as mentioned above.

Offers must be submitted in a closed envelopes sealed with red wax. The tender number and name shall be written on the top of the envelope containing the offer. Nothing should be written on the exterior of the envelope to display the identity of the tenderer.

Offers should be addressed to, The Chairman of Procurements Committee, Madayn, Post Box No. 2, Postal Code 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.

The completed Offer Document must be deposited in the Tender Box at Knowledge Oasis Muscat (KOM 1).

The Tenderer should enclose Bank Guarantee issued by any bank in the Sultanate of Oman for the value of 1% of the Tender value validity for (90) days, and addressed to The Chairman of Procurements Committee.

Madayn is not bound to accept the lowest or any other Offer and has the right to cancel these tenders and the tenderers have no right to claim for any compensations.

@madaynoman

madayn.om

in t f y o



■ OMAN, UZBEKISTAN HOLD TALKS



MUSCAT: The 7th round of talks between the foreign ministries of the Sultanate of Oman and the Republic of Uzbekistan was held in Muscat on Tuesday. The session reviewed bilateral relations and affirmed the keenness of both countries in enhancing those relations in various fields. The two sides also exchanged views on various regional and international matters of common interest. During the session, the Omani side was headed by Shaikh Khalifa bin Ali al Harthy, Under-Secretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs, while the Uzbek side was headed by Furkat Ahmedovich, Deputy Foreign Minister. – ONA

Pakistan’s navy chief visits Oman

MUSCAT: Dr Mohammed bin Nasser al Zaabi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Defence, received Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan’s Navy, in Muscat on Tuesday. They reviewed the relations between the two countries and exchanged views on some matters of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), and the Military Attaché of Pakistan’s Embassy in Muscat.

Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis al Raisi, Chief of Staff of the Sultan’s Armed Forces (SAF), also received Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan’s Navy. They exchanged views and reviewed several military matters of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), and the Military Attaché of Pakistan’s Embassy in Muscat.

Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO), received Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi, Chief of Staff of Pakistan’s Navy. They exchanged views on several matters of common interest. The meeting was attended by Commodore Tarik bin Issa al Raisi, RNO Senior Staff Officer, Commodore Ali bin Mohammed al Hosni, Director of Administration and Human Resources, and the Military Attaché of Pakistan’s Embassy in Muscat. — ONA



Oman Tourism Forum begins on Sept 27

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, Omran Group and Visit Oman platform will organise “Oman Tourism Forum” on September 27.

The two-day forum is specialised in adventure tourism. Organising this forum comes to focus on best practices and

the most prominent initiatives implemented to improve the efforts of the Sultanate of Oman in adventure tourism.

In this year’s edition, the forum will address adventure tourism and the extent of its contribution to local tourism. It will also highlight tourist attractions in the Sultanate of Oman as the country enjoys geographical

and biological diversity being mountain ranges, caves, valleys, plains, deserts, rocky hills and coastal beaches. Thus, Oman renowned to be an attractive tourist destination for tourists throughout the year.

The forum also aims to review attractions available in adventure tourism, in addition to the role of various adventure activities

in highlighting the Sultanate of Oman as a unique tourist destination at the regional and global levels. The move aims to enhance the tourism movement in various governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, particularly for adventurous tourists and those interested in this type of tourism from around the world.

— ONA



TENDER NOTICE

Oman Development Bank is the leading player in financing projects that add value to national development and providing facilities for micro, SMEs and major ventures.

Oman Development Bank seeks tenders for the following services from reputed vendors which specialized in providing Comprehensive Email Backup Solution:

Tender No	Description of service	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date for Purchasing Tender	Last Date of Submission of Tender
22/22	Comprehensive Email Backup Solution	RO100 Non-Refundable	27/09/2022	06/10/2022

- Interested vendors may obtain tender documents from the Head Office of the bank (Ground Floor) located in MBD Area near the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Investment Promotion on any working day (Sunday to Thursday) between 8 AM and 2 PM on payment of non-refundable tender fee. Vendors should enclose scan copy of bank guarantee submitted.
- The Tender enclosed in a sealed envelope addressed to IT Department, Oman Development Bank SAOC, should be submitted to the reception at Grand Floor by 12:00 PM on or before 06/10/2022.
- Interested vendors should remit the stated tenders fees as per as the below bank details.
Bank Name: Oman Development Bank
Bank Account: 000-10121129300-45
Bank Name: Bank Muscat
Corporate Branch
Swift Code: BMUSOMRXXXX
- Oman Development Bank SAOC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all of the offers, extend the tender closing date, modify tender document(s) or cancel the tender without assigning any reason. Tender Committee's decision shall be final and binding.

OMAN DEVELOPMENT BANK SAOC
Post Box 3077, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman | 24726828 | tender@odb.om | odb.om



TENDER NOTICE

Oman Development Bank is the leading player in financing projects that add value to national development and providing facilities for micro, SMEs and major ventures.

Oman Development Bank seeks tenders for the following services from reputed vendors which specialized in providing Privilege Access Management (PAM):

Tender No	Description of service	Tender Fee (RO)	Last Date for Purchasing Tender	Last Date of Submission of Tender
23/22	Privilege Access Management (PAM)	RO100 Non-Refundable	27/09/2022	06/10/2022

- Interested vendors may obtain tender documents from the Head Office of the bank (Ground Floor) located in MBD Area near the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Investment Promotion on any working day (Sunday to Thursday) between 8 AM and 2 PM on payment of non-refundable tender fee. Vendors should enclose scan copy of bank guarantee submitted.
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OMAN DEVELOPMENT BANK SAOC
Post Box 3077, PC 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman | 24726837 | tender@odb.om | odb.om

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URISM

Sulaiman, who has been arranging travel and accommodation within the GCC for business travellers, said, "Until now, the regional travel has been largely dominated between the UAE and the rest of the GCC states. Now, it will be equally distributed among all countries, which will give a much-needed boost to the land transport and food and beverage industry and budget hotels."

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

THIS IS AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF AN OFFER (THE “OFFER”) TO ALL OF THE OTHER SHAREHOLDERS (TOGETHER THE “OQIC SHAREHOLDERS” AND EACH AN “OQIC SHAREHOLDER”) OF OMAN QATAR INSURANCE COMPANY SAOG (“OQIC”) BY THE AL HOSN INVESTMENT COMPANY SAOC (THE “OFFEROR” OR “HIC”) TO ACQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL 11.5 PER CENT OF THE ISSUED SHARE CAPITAL OF OQIC (THE “ISSUED CAPITAL”) PURSUANT TO THE TAKEOVER AND ACQUISITION REGULATION (E/2/2019) (THE “TAKEOVER REGULATION”)

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS DATED 21st September 2022

OFFER DETAILS

OFFEROR or HIC	Al Hosn Investment Company SAOC, a closed joint stock investment company with commercial registration number 1008010 and registered office at PO Box 750, Postal Code 130, Azaiba, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.
OQIC	OMAN QATAR INSURANCE COMPANY SAOG, a listed public joint stock company on the Muscat Stock Exchange (“MSX”) with commercial registration number 1760882 and registered office at P O Box 3660, Postal Code 112, Sultanate of Oman. The Company is engaged in the business of life and general insurance within the Sultanate of Oman.
OFFER	The offer by the Offeror to all of the OQIC Shareholders to acquire an additional 11.5 per cent of the Issued Capital which would increase the Offeror’s shareholding in OQIC to 34.0 per cent of the Issued Capital.
Offer Dates	• Offer Opens: 2nd October 2022 (“Offer Opening Date”) • Offer Closes: 6th October 2022 (“Offer Closing Date”)
Announcement Date	• 21st September 2022
Offer Price	Rial Omani 0.197 per OQIC Share which represents 8.2% premium versus the closing price of 19 th September 2022
Offer Acceptance Qualification	In the event that OQIC Shareholders who hold in aggregate less than 11.5 per cent of the Issued Capital accept the Offer for the Offer Price in accordance with the terms of the Offer Document (together the “Selling OQIC Shareholders” and each a “Selling OQIC Shareholder”), HIC may choose to either withdraw the Offer or acquire the relevant number of OQIC Shares from the Selling OQIC Shareholders. In the event that Selling OQIC Shareholders who hold in aggregate more than 11.5 per cent of the Issued Capital accept the Offer for the Offer Price in accordance with the terms of the Offer Document, HIC will acquire the per cent of the Issued Capital from each Selling OQIC Shareholder on a pro rata basis calculated as follows (rounded up or down to the nearest whole OQIC Share but equalling not more in aggregate than 11.5 per cent. of the Issued Capital): $\frac{11.5\%}{A} \times B$ Where: • A = total number of shares of OQIC accepted to be sold to HIC by all Selling OQIC Shareholders • B = total number of shares of OQIC accepted to be sold by the relevant Selling OQIC Shareholder
Encumbrances	Only an OQIC Shareholder whose OQIC Shares are not subject to an Encumbrance may accept the Offer. For the purposes of this section an Encumbrance is when such OQIC Shares have been pledged by an OQIC Shareholder with any financial institution or blocked due to restriction or court order from any court or related authority.
Compulsory Acquisition	Due to the Offer being for only 11.5 per cent of the Issued Capital which would increase HIC’s shareholding in OQIC to 34.0 per cent of the Issued Capital, HIC will not exercise the “squeeze-out” provisions of Articles 62 to 65 (inclusive) of the Takeover Regulation.
Offer Completion	The completion of the Offer which shall occur on the date the Offer Price is paid to the Selling OQIC Shareholders post the Offer Closing Date.
Offer Rationale	HIC has been one of the initial and key shareholders in OQIC and has always been a proponent of the OQIC growth story. In line with HIC’s long-term strategic investment objectives, HIC looks to enhance its stake in OQIC and increase its exposure to the insurance sector. HIC remains committed to the long-term success of OQIC and the development of a more resilient insurance sector in the Sultanate of Oman.

OTHER DETAILS

Shares in OQIC already held by HIC	HIC holds 22.5 per cent of the Issued Capital as of the date of this Offer
Other Information required by Takeover Regulation	HIC’s intention with regard to OQIC is as follows • No intention to pursue any major changes to the business, including in continuation of the business and any plans to liquidate OQIC, sell its assets or make any other major change in the structure of OQIC • No intention to pursue any changes with regard to the continued employment of the employees of the offeree and its subsidiaries
Other Information	A) OQIC does not have any outstanding convertible securities. B) As of the date of the Offer Document, details of the number and percentage holding of voting OQIC Shares held directly or indirectly by the following persons are as set out below: a. HIC: 22,500,000 OQIC Shares 22.5 per cent. b. the HIC Directors: Nil OQIC Shares Nil per cent. c. the ultimate shareholders of HIC: Nil OQIC Shares Nil per cent. C) The parties under paragraphs A and B above have not dealt in the voting shares or convertible securities in question during the period commencing six months prior to the Offer Opening Date and ending with the date of the Offer Document.

INDICATIVE TIMELINE

S. No.	Description	Date
1	Offer Announcement	21 Sep 2022
2	Offer Document sent out to OQIC board of directors and OQIC Shareholders	25 Sep 2022
3	Offer Opening Date	02 Oct 2022
4	Offer Closing Date	06 Oct 2022
5	HIC to pay the Offer Price	20 Oct 2022

Note: The above timeline is indicative only and may be subject to change, following review, input, and approval from the Competent Authorities.

ACCEPTANCE OF OFFER - TERMS, CONDITIONS, & PROCEDURE

Notice Procedure	Only electronic copy of this announcement and Offer Document will be sent based on Muscat Clearing & Depository SAOC (“MCD”) data and will be available on HIC, Sohar International Bank SAOG (“SIB”) and CMA websites
Acceptance Form	The acceptance form to be used by OQIC Shareholders to submit their acceptance of the Offer pursuant to the terms of the Offer Document. These forms will be sent to each OQIC Shareholder through email. The acceptance form will also be available on HIC, SIB and CMA websites.
Procedure for acceptance of offer by OQIC Shareholders	1. In order to accept the Offer, the OQIC Shareholders are required to; i. send an email to oqic.tenderoffer@soharinternational.com with stating a scanned copy of Acceptance Form duly completed and signed, confirming their acceptance of the Offer or alternatively, ii. send the Acceptance Form duly completed and signed, delivered to Sohar International SAOG, Investment Banking Department,P.O Box 44, Hai Al Mina, P.C 114, Sultanate of Oman along with the requisite documents (as set out below) on or before 2 pm, on the Offer Closing Date. 2. Completed Acceptance Form / Email once submitted cannot be revoked by OQIC Shareholders. 3. The Offer will remain open for acceptance for 5 days starting from 02 October 2022 to 06 October 2022 (both days inclusive), during business hours i.e. 8 am – 2 pm. Acceptances received after working hours on Offer Closing Date shall not be entertained.
Required Documents	Letter/form of acceptance furnished by the OQIC Shareholder(s) without the requisite documents may be rejected by the Offer Manager as being incomplete and invalid. The letter/form of acceptance must be accompanied by the following documents: For Individual Applicants: • A copy of Omani ID for Omani national OQIC Shareholders and Passport copy for Non-Omani national OQIC Shareholders, • Birth Certificate of the minor OQIC Shareholder, if father is accepting on behalf of his minor children. • A copy of valid power of attorney duly endorsed by the competent legal authorities must be included in the event the acceptance is on behalf of another person (with the exception of an acceptance made by a father on behalf of his minor children). For Corporate Applicants: • CR Copy, • a certified copy of board resolution authorizing persons to accept the Offer with specimen signatures of such authorized persons,
Acceptance by HIC	The acceptance by HIC of the OQIC Shares tendered by the OQIC Shareholders and settlement is subject to the following conditions: • The Offer receives the minimum threshold acceptance (11.5 per cent. of the Issued Capital). • Approval of the CMA for the final Offer result. • The settlement for the tendered OQIC Shares does not contravene any applicable laws and regulations. • The letter/form of acceptance being duly and validly completed along with the required documents and submitted to the Offer Manager on or before the Offer Closing Date. • The person accepting the Offer is a valid OQIC Shareholder. • HIC not withdrawing the Offer in accordance with the provisions of the Takeover Regulation.
Timing of payment of the Offer Price	Upon receipt of valid letter/form of acceptance along with the requisite documents and subject to satisfactory verification, the Offer Manager will notify the eligible OQIC Shareholders regarding acceptance of the Offer and arrange to make payment by bank draft / pay order / cheque / bank transfer in favour of the OQIC Shareholder within 10 (ten) days of the Offer Closing Date. No interest, mark-up, surcharge, tax or other increment will be payable for any cause or reason on the aggregate price for the OQIC Shares purchased by HIC from any OQIC Shareholder for any cause or reason.

OFFER RELATED PARTIES & CONTACT PERSONS

Offeror	Al-Hosn Investment Company SAOC Address: PO Box 750, Postal Code 130, Azaiba, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman. Telephone: +968 24397200 Email : a.almezeini@alhosnoman.com
OQIC	Oman Qatar Insurance Company SAOG Address: PO Box 3660, Postal Code: 112, Ruwi, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman Telephone: +968 24765350 Email : mohammed.jawad@oqic.com
Offer Manager	Sohar International Bank SAOG Address: P.O Box 44, Hai Al Mina, P.C 114, Sultanate of Oman Telephone: +968 24761969 Email : mubarak.moosa@soharinternational.com
Legal Advisor to the Offeror	Zaid Al-Malki & Nasser Al-Tabeeb Advocacy & Legal Consultancy Telephone: +968 99000300 Email : zaid@zaid-law.com

OPAZ board approves usufruct fees system



MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) held met in Muscat on Tuesday. The meeting was chaired by Dr Ali bin Masoud al Sunaidy, Chairman of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones, at OPAZ headquarters in Muscat.

The Board approved the registration fees mechanism for the usufruct contracts of real estate properties in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (SEZAD). Accordingly, SEZAD will later announce the relevant details. Further, the Board approved a number of other

usufruct applications related to the electricity sector, as well as approving the vision and mission of OPAZ.

During the meeting, OPAZ Board of Directors was briefed on the proposed investment promotion strategy to attract more projects to the zones during the next phase. The Board was also updated on the different efforts made to transfer the affiliation of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates “Madayn” to OPAZ as per the Royal Decree No. (53/2022) and the actions that have been taken towards integration between the industrial cities, the free zones and the special

economic zones supervised by OPAZ. Moreover, the meeting touched on the reports related to the challenges facing applications for establishing cement projects in the zones.

It is noteworthy that OPAZ was established by the Royal Decree No. (105/2020) on August 18, 2020 to supervise the Special Economic Zone at Duqm, the free zones in Suhar, Salalah, Al Mazyouna and any other special economic zone or free zone in the Sultanate of Oman. Furthermore, OPAZ supervises the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) as per the Royal Decree No. (53/2022).

Training for new teachers of geography, history



STAFF REPORTER
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

The Ministry of Education, represented by the Department of Human Sciences Supervision in the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision, on Monday organised the online forum ‘Towards Sustainable Competencies’ to train 112 new teachers of history and geography. The virtual forum began with a speech by the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision delivered by Darwish al Kiyomi, Assistant Director of the Human Sciences Supervision Department at the Ministry, in which he said: “The New Teachers Forum is one of the important educational programs that contribute to the development of performance levels in order to reach the ultimate goal, which is to achieve the quality of the process. The new teachers’ forum for the two units of supervision of geography and history for this academic year due to the belief of the importance of the sustainability

of the educational and scientific competencies of the teacher and its positive and important role in raising the technical levels of teachers, which is reflected positively on the achievement levels of students.”

Two sessions were held, the first included the presentation of three papers. Huda al Amri, supervisor of the geography subject, presented the first paper titled ‘The Social Studies from Planning to Assessment’. Dr Mohammed al Nadabi, first-supervisor of the history subject, presented the second paper entitled ‘Future skills and how to employ them in social studies’. Sultan al Hasani, first-supervisor of the geography subject, presented an explanation of the terms of the supervisory visit form.

In the second session, Yahya al Hadhrami, a geography subject supervisor, presented a paper on how to produce interactive maps using PowerPoint and Zuwaina al Thuhli, a new teacher in geography, presented a paper on models of online reinforcement methods.

India’s Vistara gets nod for flights from Muscat

MUSCAT: The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on Tuesday issued its approval for India’s Vistara Airlines, to operate direct flights between Mumbai and Muscat from October 1.

The airline got the approval to operate seven flights per week.

Vistara is a joint venture between India’s Tata Group and Singapore Airlines.

Vistara commenced its commercial operations on January 9, 2015, and connects destinations across India and abroad.

The airline has a fleet of 53

aircraft, including 41 Airbus A320, five Airbus A321neo, five Boeing 737-800NG, and two Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft, and has flown more than 35 million customers.

Earlier, Vistara announced non-stop flights between Mumbai and Abu Dhabi from October 1.



Tunisia’s anti-terrorism police detain former PM

TUNIS: Tunisia’s anti-terrorism police detained for one day Ali Laarayedh, a former prime minister and senior official in the opposition Ennahda party, after an investigation into suspicions of sending fighters to Syria, lawyers said on Tuesday.

In the same case, the police postponed the hearing of Tunisia’s opposition leader and speaker of the dissolved parliament Rached Ghannouchi to midday on Tuesday, after waiting for about 14 hours.

It is expected that Laarayedh will appear before a judge on Wednesday, lawyer Mokhtar Jmayi said.

“We are shocked... the file is completely empty and without any evidence,” Samir Dilou, another lawyer said.

Ennahda denies accusations of terrorism, calling it a political attack on a foe of President Kais Saied.

Ghannouchi, 81, has accused Saied of an anti-democratic coup since he seized most powers last summer, shutting down the parliament and moving to rule by decree, powers he has largely formalised with a new constitution ratified in a July referendum.

Last month, several former security officials and two Ennahda members were arrested on charges connected to Tunisians travelling. Security and official sources estimated that around 6,000 Tunisians travelled to Syria and Iraq last decade to join fighter groups including IS.



Rached Ghannouchi, leader of the Tunisian ‘Ennahdha’ party, departs his house to go to the offices of Tunisia’s counter-terrorism prosecutor in Tunis. – AFP

Ennahda denies accusations of terrorism, calling it a political attack on a foe of President Kais Saied

Many were killed there while others escaped and returned to Tunisia. Meanwhile, Ennahda categorically denies the claims that its leader, Rached Ghannouchi, and Tunisia’s former prime minister Ali Laarayedh were involved in sending fighters to Syria and Iraq.

The accusations have resurfaced after President Kais Saied tightened his grip on the judiciary, following the suspension of the Ennahda-dominated parliament last year.

Ghannouchi had arrived at the headquarters of the anti-terrorism centre on Monday afternoon for questioning, according to a reporter in the

capital Tunis, several hours after his deputy Laarayedh. Ennahda played a central role in Tunisia’s post-Ben Ali politics until Saied began his power grab in July last year, followed by a controversial referendum which granted unchecked powers to his office.

Ennahda had on Sunday decried attempts “to use the judiciary to tarnish the opposition’s image” and implicate its leaders in “fabricated affairs”.

The probe against Ghannouchi and Laarayedh was meant to “distract the public” from dealing with economic and social issues and the “worsening conditions” in the country, the party said in a statement.

In July, the same anti-terrorism unit questioned Ghannouchi, 81, in a probe into allegations of corruption and money laundering linked to transfers from abroad to the charity Namaa Tunisia, affiliated with Ennahda. — Reuters/AFP

MILITARY DRILL AT DEMILITARIZED ZONE



A South Korean Army K2 tank fires during a live fire military exercise during the Defence Expo Korea (DX Korea) at a training field near the demilitarized zone separating the two Koreas in Pocheon. – AFP

Varanasi is nominated as SCO’s Tourism and Cultural Capital

KAUSHALENDRA SINGH
@patkaushal

The Indian city of Varanasi has been nominated as the first SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital for 2022-2023. The nomination took place at the 22nd meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on September 16, 2022. Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the summit, a source in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs said.

The nomination of Varanasi as the first-ever SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital will promote tourism, cultural and humanitarian exchanges between India and the SCO member countries.

It also underlines India’s ancient civilisational links with

member states of SCO, especially the Central Asian republics.

The regulations for the nomination of the SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital were adopted at the Dushanbe SCO Summit in 2021 with the objective of promoting cooperation between the SCO member states in the field of culture and tourism.

Under the framework of this major cultural outreach programme, a number of events will be hosted in Varanasi during 2022-23, for which guests will be invited to participate from SCO member states.

These events are expected to attract Indologists, scholars, authors, musicians and artists, photojournalists, travel bloggers and other invited guests.

The regulations for the nomination of the SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital were adopted

at the Dushanbe SCO Summit in 2021 with the objective of promoting cooperation between the SCO member states in the field of culture and tourism.

At a media briefing, Vinay Kwatra, Foreign Secretary, said, “This is a befitting recognition of the historic city and opens the door for greater cultural and people-to-people ties between India and the region.”

The venue for the first SCO Tourism and Cultural Capital would witness national and international events in collaboration with the Uttar Pradesh government and the Centre to celebrate this recognition, Kwatra said.

Varanasi, as per SCO’s decision, “would see a special working group on start-ups and innovation at India’s initiative,” he said.

Deadly clashes erupt in Nablus after arrest of Hamas members

RAMALLAH: One man was killed when clashes broke out overnight in the northern West Bank city of Nablus after the arrest of two Hamas members by Palestinian security forces.

The 53-year-old man was killed in an exchange of gunfire between officers and Palestinian activists, a hospital in the city said.

It was initially unclear whether the man was a bystander or involved in the fighting. Video footage showed a Palestinian police vehicle being pelted with rocks.

The tensions erupted following the arrest of two members of Hamas late on Monday. One of them was a local leader who was also wanted by Israel.

The Palestinian security operation came after the Israeli



Palestinian protesters clash with Palestinian security forces in Nablus in the occupied West Bank following the arrest of two members of Hamas. – AFP

army accused the Palestinians of not taking effective action against activists in the autonomous cities of Nablus and Jenin. Israel is on high alert as the Jewish new year holiday of Rosh Hashanah begins on Sunday evening.

Meanwhile, a statement from the security forces confirmed the death of bystander Firas Yaish and said they were “waiting for a medical report” on the circumstances of his killing.

He was killed “in a place where no security personnel were present,” forces spokesman Talal Dweikat said in a statement.

Unrest persisted through the morning, with hundreds of youths hurling rocks at PA armoured vehicles and the sound of gunfire ringing out across the city centre,

AFP correspondents reported.

Ahmed, 26, a protester who declined to give his family name citing personal security concerns, said the protesters’ anger was fuelled by “security coordination between the PA and the occupation (Israel).” Hamas condemned the arrest of 30-year-old Musaab Shtayyeh, calling it a “kidnapping... a national crime” and a “stain” on the PA’s image.

It demanded the immediate release of Shtayyeh and Ameer Tbaileh, who was arrested with him, and blasted the PA for keeping up security coordination.

“The authority has positioned itself as an exclusive agent of the occupation (Israel) in the face of our Palestinian people,” the statement said. — dpa/AFP

SHORT TAKES

ISLAMABAD

Jolie in Pakistan to support flood victims

Hollywood star and international humanitarian Angelina Jolie arrived in Pakistan in a show of support for the more than 33 million people affected by catastrophic floods.

Jolie will visit water-ravaged areas and highlight the need for urgent support as well as long-term solutions to address the multiplying crises of climate change, the International Rescue Committee said in a statement.

A video showing Jolie at a Pakistani airport went viral



on social media soon after she landed and the news was also aired by local media.

She had also visited victims of the 2010 floods and 2005 earthquake in Pakistan. — dpa

WASHINGTON

Blinken urges extension of Yemen truce

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met Yemeni Chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council Rashad Al Alimi on Monday in New York and discussed the need to extend a UN-mediated truce by October 2, the State Department said.

A UN-mediated truce between the coalition and the Ansar Allah has largely held since April. The United Nations is making efforts to extend and expand the truce deal between the coalition and the Ansar Allah



that expires in early October. The State Department said the truce has brought “much needed calm and hope while improving the lives of millions of Yemenis across the country.” — AFP

TOKYO

Four feared dead after typhoon hits Japan

Two people were confirmed dead and another two were found “without vital signs” after Typhoon Nanmadol slammed into Japan over the weekend, a government spokesman said.

The storm system made landfall by the southwestern city of Kagoshima on Sunday night, and dumped heavy rain across the Kyushu region before moving along the west coast.

The storm toppled trees, smashed windows and dumped a month’s worth of rain in a 24-



hour period on parts of Miyazaki prefecture, where the two deaths were confirmed. Government spokesman said another two people had been found “without vital signs.” — AFP



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In brief

UNITED NATIONS



MACRON TO MEET RAISI TO URGE REVIVAL OF DEAL

French President Emmanuel Macron will meet with his Iranian counterpart as Paris warns the clerical state that it will not get a better proposal to revive a nuclear accord. The Elysee Palace said Macron will meet President Ebrahim Raisi on Tuesday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York and with US President Joe Biden the next day. “We’ll see what this week brings,” French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna told reporters earlier on Monday. “The window of opportunity seems ready to close again.” “We are repeatedly saying... there is no better offer for Iran,” she said. — AFP

THE HAGUE



CHEERS AS DUTCH KING OPENS PARLIAMENT

King Willem-Alexander opened the Dutch parliament amid public cheers and boos, as he announced a \$18-billion package of support for citizens facing soaring energy prices. Traditionally held on the third Tuesday of September, the event this year was the first time since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 that the public was allowed to line the scenic route between the king’s palace and the Royal Theatre in The Hague. Thousands of onlookers, many decked out in orange, lined the streets. But there were also jeers from some in the crowd. They waved upside-down Dutch flags. — AFP

LONDON



BRITISH RAILWAYS FACE DISRUPTION WITH OCTOBER 1 STRIKE

Britain’s railway could come to an ‘effective standstill’ on October 1 with workers from Network Rail and 14 train operating companies planning strike action over pay, job security and working conditions, a union said. The RMT trade union said the 24-hour strike action comes after it received no further offers from the industry to arrive at a negotiated settlement. Workers across other industries including postal and bus workers are also planning strikes on Saturday, October 1, to coincide with the annual conference of Britain’s governing Conservative Party. — Reuters

Opening global summit, UN chief warns of ‘winter of discontent’

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations’ massive global summit returned on Tuesday with a stark warning from the world body’s chief of an upcoming “winter of global discontent” from rising prices, a warming planet and deadly conflicts.

After two years of pandemic restrictions and video addresses, the UN General Assembly again asked leaders to come in person if they wish to speak — with a sole exception made for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.

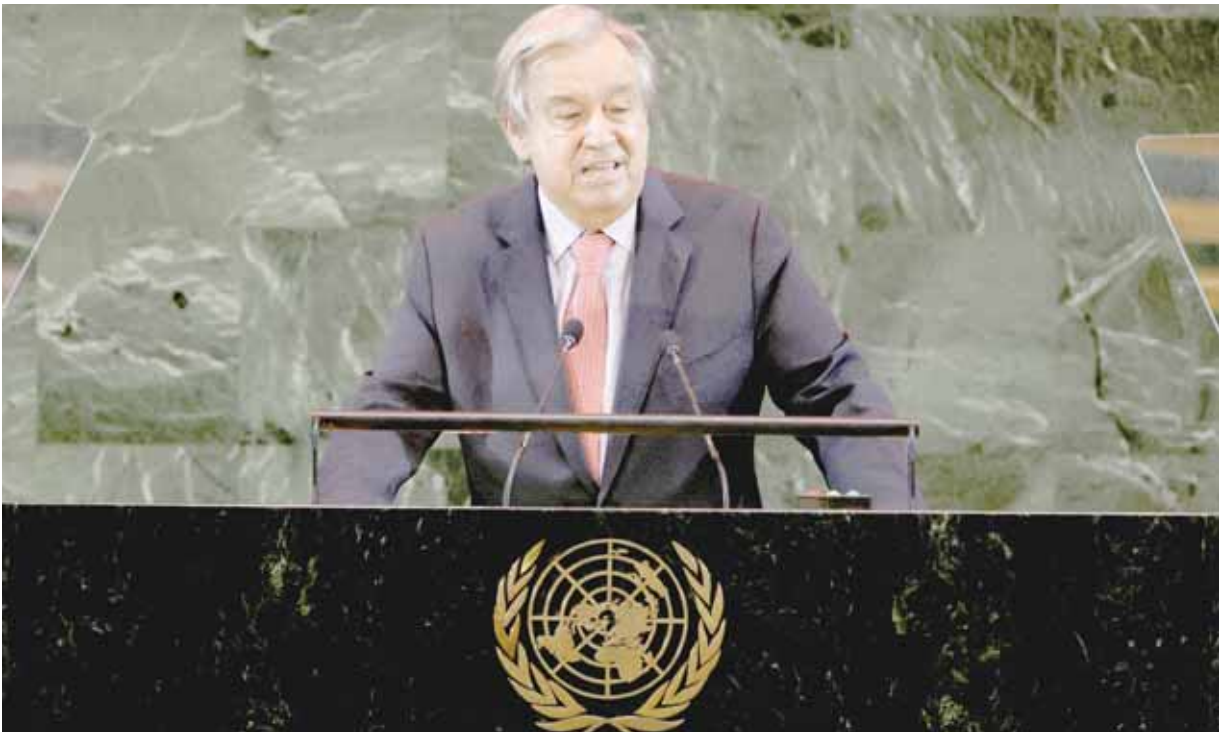
UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, while saluting efforts for global cooperation, warned of a dire state of the planet.

“A winter of global discontent is on the horizon,” Guterres said as he opened the annual General Assembly.

“Trust is crumbling, inequalities are exploding, our planet is burning. People are hurting -- with the most vulnerable suffering the most.”

With global temperatures rising and a chunk of Pakistan the size of the United Kingdom recently under water, Guterres lashed out at fossil fuel companies and the “suicidal war against nature.”

“Let’s tell it like it is — Our world is addicted to fossil fuels. It’s time for an intervention. We need to hold fossil fuel companies and



UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres addressing the UN General Assembly in New York. — AFP

their enablers to account,” Guterres said.

He called on all developed economies to tax profits from fossil fuels and dedicate the funds both to compensate for damage from climate change and to help people struggling with high prices. “Polluters must pay,” Guterres said.

The summit was disrupted after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, with President Joe Biden of the United States, by tradition the second speaker on the opening

day, instead due to speak on Wednesday. Day one features French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, the leaders of the two largest economies of the European Union, which has mobilised to impose tough sanctions over Russia’s attack on Ukraine.

“This year, Ukraine will be very high on the agenda. It will be unavoidable,” top EU diplomat Josep Borrell told reporters in New York. “There are many other

problems, we know. But the war in Ukraine has been sending shock waves around the world.”

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock vowed to support countries hardest hit by the fallout from the war as she headed to the General Assembly on Tuesday.

“The brutality of Russia’s war of aggression and its threat to the peace order in Europe have not blinded us to the fact that its dramatic effects are also clearly

Our world is addicted to fossil fuels. It’s time for an intervention. We need to hold fossil fuel companies and their enablers to account

ANTONIO
GUTERRES

UN Secretary-General

being felt in many other regions of the world,” Baerbock said.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was visiting despite a hostile reaction from the United States. With the Ukraine war leading to a global grain crisis, hunger is another major issue on the agenda. More than 200 NGOs called for urgent action from leaders gathered for the General Assembly to “end the spiralling global hunger crisis.”

“Around the world, 50 million people are on the brink of starvation in 45 countries,” they said, adding that as many as 19,700 people are estimated to be dying of hunger everyday, which translates to one person every four seconds. — AFP

Hurricane Fiona hits Turks and Caicos as Category 3 storm

SAN JUAN/SANTO DOMINGO: Hurricane Fiona bore down on Turks and Caicos Islands on Tuesday as a powerful Category 3 storm, threatening to devastate the tiny Caribbean archipelago after cutting a path of destruction through the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

Turks and Caicos could experience up to 8 inches of rainfall and life-threatening flash flooding from the storm, which was just offshore of the chain’s biggest island, the National Hurricane Center said in its 8 am Eastern update.

A tropical storm warning is up for the southeastern Bahamas and concern is growing that the hurricane could have the island-nation of Bermuda in its sights.

Fiona, the first “major hurricane” of the season, is forecast to grow into a Category

4 in the coming days as it turns north and passes near Bermuda later this week, said Richard Pasch, senior hurricane specialist at the NHC.

“Turks and Caicos Islands, I urge you to heed the advice and warnings given by the Department of Disaster Management and Emergencies and implore you to carry out all necessary preparations to protect your families and your property,” Premier Washington Misick said in a statement from London, where he was attending the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II.

At least three people have died in the storm, two in Puerto Rico and one in Guadeloupe earlier in the week, officials said.

On the Turks and Caicos Islands, a British Overseas Territory with 40 low-lying coral islands and a population of about

40,000 about 700 miles southeast of Florida, the government’s National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) told residents of three eastern islands to shelter in place, and ordered businesses to close.

“All persons are to remain indoors at their residence, place of safety or where they seek shelter until the NEOC issues National All Clear,” the agency told residents of Grand Turk, South Caicos and Salt Cay.

Residents were stocking up on food and water while shelters were being prepared.

Foreign governments issued travel alerts for the islands, a popular tourist destination. Similar preparations were under way in the eastern Bahamas. Fiona is on track to hit the eastern Bahamas on Wednesday, when it could reach Category 4 strength. — Reuters



Craters formed by a meteoroid impact on Mars, the first to be detected by Nasa’s InSight, are seen in an image taken by Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. — Reuters

Nasa’s InSight lander detects space rocks as they slam into Mars

WASHINGTON: Mars, by virtue of its tenuous atmosphere and proximity to our solar system’s asteroid belt, is far more vulnerable than Earth to being struck by space rocks - one of the many differences between the two planetary neighbours.

Scientists are now gaining a fuller understanding of this Martian trait, with help from Nasa’s robotic InSight lander. Researchers on Monday described how InSight detected seismic and acoustic waves from the impact of four meteorites and then calculated the location of the craters they left — the first such measurements anywhere other than Earth.

The researchers used observations from Nasa’s Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter in space to confirm the crater locations.

“These seismic measurements give us a completely new tool for investigating Mars, or any other planet we can land a seismometer on,” said planetary

geophysicist Bruce Banerdt of Nasa’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory, the InSight mission’s principal investigator.

The space rocks InSight tracked — one landing in 2020 and the other three in 2021 — were relatively modest in size, estimated to weigh up to about 440 pounds, with diameters of up to about 50 cm and leaving craters of up to about 24 feet wide. They landed between 85 km and 290 km from InSight’s location. One exploded into at least three pieces that each gouged their own craters.

“We can connect a known source type, location and size to what the seismic signal looks like. We can apply this information to better understand InSight’s entire catalogue of seismic events, and use the results on other planets and moons, too,” said Brown University planetary scientist Ingrid Daubar, a co-author of the study published in the journal Nature Geoscience. — Reuters



A person walks amidst debris on the seashore in the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. — Reuters

Living in the Empire’s Shadow



Khalid Alsafi Al Huraibi
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The writer is an entrepreneur and innovation adviser

In 1996, millions of Arab speaking families around the world became fans of one of the most popular TV series based on a novel, by the great Egyptian author Ehsan Abdul Qudus.

You can tell from the interesting name of this novel “I will not live in my father’s coat/Lan Aish fi Jilbal Abi” that the theme is equally interesting.

This rags-to-riches story follows the life and love of a simple, hardworking recycling warehouse worker, named Abdul Ghafur, who struggled before establishing an entrepreneurial empire.

Perhaps, if we look more closely into the novel, we could see that the reason behind this story’s popularity that there is a little of Abdul Ghafur in each one of us who is struggling to find his or her own voice and independence, as opposed to living in the shadow of a guardian figure.

Just like Abdu Ghafur, fast forward to our present time, we

are witnessing millions around the world sharing their thoughts about nations around the world who struggling, to find their voice and independence after centuries of living in the shadow of the British Empire.

As we live in this age of digital disruption that is allowing us to follow in real time and contemplate on the mourning of the late Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and the Realms, may her soul rest in peace, and the coronation of her son King Charles III, it is worth considering investing in three best practices for communities that wish to find their independence and voice: Investing in identity, investing in sharp power and investing in future markets.

Investing in identity

Why are millions around the world following the news of a monarchy that has seized to be relevant to them almost one century ago?

MODERNISING THE LOCAL CONTENT OF EDUCATION CAN PLAY A KEY ROLE IN HELPING US FIND OUR INDEPENDENT VOICE THAT RESPECTS ALL CULTURES

I would argue that the reason as the great sociology scholar Ibn Khaldun put it in his book the Introduction is “the defeated fond of imitating the victor”.

For a nation to adopt the winning mindset that makes great nations, it must shed the mindset developed in the age of imperial colonisation. One look and conversation with our young generations shows how interconnected our world has become and how their role models in life, arts, gaming, fashion, and design come almost from all over the world with very few local examples.

Modernising the local content of education can play a key role in helping us find our independent voice that respects all cultures and carries our culture into a peaceful and prosperous future.

Investing in sharp power

Defence and security today is more about sharp power than hard or soft power, based on the works of Joseph Nye. Cybersecurity and armed drones are today’s equivalent to the Gunboat and aircraft carrier diplomacy of colonial powers.

For example, conflicts in East and West are determined in war rooms thousands of miles away with screens that are similar PlayStation game rooms.

Any nation that is relying on other for its cybersecurity or Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Technology- UAVs is at risk of being a target for nations that invested in this new sharp power strategy.

Investing in future markets

The world’s post-pandemic

demography is changing, with millions of deaths and infections in addition to new priorities related to our health and lifestyle.

Based on these changes markets are changing the way they look at future demand for goods and services.

For example, there are questions raised given the global supply chain crisis: What are the alternatives to the West and China as the world’s factory? Who has more disposable income? Who is willing to pay fair and sustainable prices for our products, goods, and services?

For centuries, our region has been the source of cheap raw material which the fuelled the world’s wealth, and the world’s wealthy nations grew to be the guardians of the rest of the world.

We have a responsibility today to build a healthier, interdependent relationship where we all thrive, and does not entail living in the shadow of others.

Can Britain’s King Charles fill his treasured mother’s shoes?

MICHAEL HOLDEN AND KATE HOLTON

Teenager Olivia Burch waited for hours in a queue with other mourners to pay a final tribute to Queen Elizabeth as her body lay in state.

But despite that devotion, she thought Britain should no longer have a monarchy.

“I think it’s gone. It’s too traditional and old-fashioned, and I don’t think we can spend so much money on a family with no more right to be here than anyone else,” said the 19-year-old Londoner, one of hundreds of thousands who waited in line to file past Elizabeth’s coffin before Monday’s state funeral.

“The queen was different, though.”

Her words, echoed by others who publicly mourned the queen, illustrated some of the challenges King Charles faces as he succeeds his mother after her 70 years on the throne.

The funeral, capping days of pageantry and ceremony since Elizabeth died on September 8, drew hundreds of thousands of people onto the streets of London and millions of viewers on television. The events underlined the affection and respect a majority of Britons felt toward the queen.

Charles, 73, takes the throne at a time when opinion polls show that support in Britain for the monarchy has slipped to its lowest level, and that - despite a jump since he became king - he is much less personally popular than his mother.

He is the oldest person to become a British monarch, and there are still some who resent him and his wife Camilla, now Queen Consort, for the break-up of his first marriage to the late Princess Diana.

The big question obviously is, when she (Elizabeth) has passed, was it all about her or was it about the institution of monarchy?” historian Anthony Seldon said. “And will King Charles III be able to maintain that prominence in this country ... but also across the world?”

Seldon noted how a decade ago, polls showed 75 per cent approved of and valued the monarchy. Now, that figure is 62 per cent.

He said if it ever edged below 50 per cent then the monarchy would be over: “There will be an elected head of state”.

For the time being, there has been a groundswell of goodwill towards Charles. — **Reuters**



Thomas L. Friedman

The writer is an American political commentator and author

While some Russian soldiers in Ukraine are voting with their feet against Vladimir Putin’s shameful war, their hasty retreat doesn’t mean that Putin is surrendering.

Last week, in fact, he opened a whole new front — on energy. Putin thinks he’s found a cold war that he can win.

He’s going to try to literally freeze the European Union this winter by choking off supplies of Russian gas and oil to pressure the EU into abandoning Ukraine.

Putin’s Kremlin predecessors used frigid winters to defeat Napoleon and Hitler, and Putin clearly thinks it’s his ace in the hole to defeat Ukraine’s president, Volodymyr Zelensky, who told his people last week, “Russia is doing everything in 90 days of this winter to break the resistance of Ukraine, the resistance of Europe and the resistance of the world.”

I wish I could say for certain that Putin will fail — that the Americans will outproduce him.

And I wish I could write that Putin will regret his tactics, because they will eventually transform Russia from the energy czar of Europe to an energy colony of China — where Putin is now selling a lot of his oil at a deep discount to overcome his loss of Western markets.

Yes, I wish I could write all of those things. But I can’t — not unless the US and its Western allies stop living in a green fantasy world that says we can go from dirty fossil fuels to clean renewable energy by just flipping a switch.

I wish that were possible. This column has been devoted for 27 years to advocating clean energy and mitigating climate change. I’m still all in — all in — on those ends. But you can’t will the ends unless you’ve also willed the means.

‘And we demonstrably have not done that!

Despite all the wind and solar investments in the past five years, fossil fuels — oil, gas and coal — still accounted for 82 per cent of total world primary energy use in 2021 (required

Putin’s new cold war: Freeze Europe



Russian President Vladimir Putin thinks he’s found a cold war that he can win. — **AFP**

PUTIN’S KREMLIN PREDECESSORS USED FRIGID WINTERS TO DEFEAT NAPOLEON AND HITLER, AND PUTIN CLEARLY THINKS IT’S HIS ACE IN THE HOLE TO DEFEAT UKRAINE’S PRESIDENT ZELENSKYY

for things like heating, transportation and electricity generation), down only 3 percentage points in those five years. In America alone in 2021, about 61 per cent of electricity generation was from fossil fuels (primarily coal and natural gas)

while about 19 per cent was from nuclear energy and about 20 per cent was from renewable energy sources.

In a world of growing, energy-hungry middle classes in Asia, Africa and Latin America, it takes huge amounts of new clean energy to make even a small dent in our overall energy mix. It’s not a matter of flipping a switch.

We have a long transition ahead,

and we will make it only if we urgently embrace smart, pragmatic thinking on energy policy, which in turn will lead to greater climate security and economic security.

Otherwise, Putin can still hurt Ukraine and the West badly.

Before the Ukraine war started, Russia provided nearly 40 per cent of the natural gas and half of the coal Europe used for heat and electricity. Last week, Russia announced it was suspending most gas supplies to Europe until Western sanctions on Russia are lifted.

Putin has also vowed to cut off all oil shipments to Europe if the Western allies carry out their plan to limit what they will pay for Russian oil.

Without sufficient affordable alternative supplies of natural gas, The Financial Times reported, some factories in Europe have had to shut down, “unable to pay the cost of fuel.”

Energy bills — up 400 per cent in some European countries — “are pushing consumers to near poverty.”

For some the choice this winter could be heat or eat.

This is forcing their governments to offer massive subsidies, distorting their budgets, in hopes of staving off populist backlashes and pressures to get Ukraine to surrender to Putin — and some are also going back to burning coal. — **New York Times**

Energy crisis fires global hunt for polluting fuel

SUDARSHAN VARADHAN

The sleepy Tanzanian port of Mtwara mainly dealt in cashew nuts until late last year. Now it bustles with vessels loading up with coal, as Russia’s war on Ukraine drives a worldwide race for the polluting fuel.

Tanzania traditionally exports thermal coal only to neighbouring countries in east Africa; sending it further afield was out of the question, as it required trucking the material more than 600 km from mines in its southwest to Mtwara, the nearest Indian Ocean port. Europe’s crippling energy crisis has changed all that.

Prices for thermal coal, used to generate electricity, have leapt to record levels as a result of the war, which has led to many European countries losing access to vital supplies of natural gas and coal from their top provider Russia.

Buyers in Europe and beyond are now vying to pay top dollar for coal from often remote mines in places such as Tanzania, Botswana and even potentially Madagascar. The resurgent coal demand, driven by governments trying to wean themselves off Russian energy while keeping a lid on power prices, clashes with climate plans to shift away from the most polluting fossil fuel.

“European players, after the Russian war, are going to any place where there is coal,” Rizwan Ahmed, managing director of coal miner Bluesky Minings said in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. “They are offering to pay very good prices.”

Commodities trader Cargill has seen a marked rise in coal shipments into Europe in recent months, said Jan Dieleman, president of Cargill’s ocean transportation division, with the company transporting 9 million tonnes of coal globally in the June-August period compared with 7 million a year earlier. “Europe is competing with other buyers and the alternative is more expensive, which is gas,” said Dieleman. “Europe should be able to source coal and we will see very strong flows into Europe from Colombia, South Africa and even further away.”

Even though the window of opportunity may be short should the geopolitical winds shift, some countries with coal resources see the margins to be gained as too good a chance to miss.

Front-month physical thermal coal at Australia’s Newcastle port - a global benchmark - was trading at \$429 a tonne on September 16, just below an all-time high of \$483.50 in March and up from around \$176/tonne this time last year. Mtwara has seen 13 vessels load up with coal since November last year when it launched its first-ever coal shipment, according to a port official; the latest, the MV Miss Simona, a bulk carrier with 34,529-tonne capacity, docked last week, loaded up and sailed off to France. Since the end of June, 57 cargo orders - requests for available vessels — to ship Tanzanian coal have been seen on the spot freight market compared with just two in the same period last year, according to analysis from maritime and commodities data platform Shipfix.

Global seaborne thermal coal imports reached 97.8 million tonnes in July, the highest level on record and up more than 9 per cent year-on-year, an analysis from ship broker Braemar shows. The volume dropped to 89 million tonnes in August, largely due to export disruptions from major producer Australia.

Tanzania expects coal exports to double this year to around 696,773 tonnes, the country’s Mining Commission said, while production is expected to increase by 50 per cent to about 1,364,707 tonnes.

Targeting sizeable tax revenues from this jump in exports, the government is considering building a railway that would link the coal-producing Ruvuma region to Mtwara, said Yahya Semamba, acting executive secretary of the Mining Commission, a government body.

Tanzania-based miner Ruvuma Coal has already exported at least 400,000 tonnes of coal via a trader to countries including the Netherlands, France and India since November, according to trade data. — Reuters



GETTING READY FOR NAVRATRI

Participants from an art group wearing traditional dresses rehearse Garba dance ahead of the Navratri festival in Ahmedabad, India, on Tuesday. — AFP

Britain cleans up and looks to future after queen’s funeral

JITENDRA JOSHI

Flags on government buildings returned to full mast and an epic clean-up operation was under way on Tuesday as British public life resumed after the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, although the royal family remains in mourning for another week.

Around a quarter of a million people queued round the clock to view the queen’s coffin as it lay in state in the days leading up to the funeral, the UK government said.

Liz Truss, appointed prime minister by the queen just two days before she died on September 8, flew to the UN General Assembly hours after delivering a biblical reading at the lavish funeral.

En route to New York, Truss praised the “huge outpouring of love and affection” shown towards the late monarch, as well as the “huge amount of warmth towards” her successor, King Charles III.

Charles, 73, and his family will remain in mourning for another seven days.

That means no official engagements after he spent an exhausting week touring his new kingdom and attending to the ornate pageantry of a role that he has spent a lifetime preparing to take on.

The royal Twitter account published a picture of the queen hiking in 1971 at her Scottish retreat of Balmoral, where she died at the age of 96 as Britain’s longest-reigning monarch.

The photograph was accompanied with the words: “May flights of Angels sing thee to thy rest. In loving memory of Her Majesty The Queen.”

The quotation is from the tragic conclusion of Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet”, and was also used by Charles in his first national broadcast as king the day after his mother passed away.

Britain’s National Grid said there was

AROUND A QUARTER OF A MILLION PEOPLE QUEUED ROUND THE CLOCK TO VIEW THE QUEEN’S COFFIN AS IT LAY IN STATE IN THE DAYS LEADING UP TO THE FUNERAL, THE UK GOVERNMENT SAID

a drop-off of two gigawatts in usage on the UK power network — the equivalent of 200 million light-bulbs being switched off — from 10:30 am to 11:00 am (09:30 to 10:00 GMT) on Monday.

“This was because people were stopping their usual activities in time for the funeral,” a spokesman said.

Following a public holiday for the funeral, business life was resuming, and workers were busy clearing up the debris left by the estimated million-plus people who lined the streets of London on Monday.

Members of parliament are set to take an oath of allegiance to their new sovereign, as political life also resumes after the official period of government mourning.

Culture Secretary Michelle Donelan said she did not know the final cost of the state funeral at Westminster Abbey, which entailed a vast security operation for hundreds of foreign dignitaries.

But she told Sky News the British public would agree that it “was money well spent”.

“You saw so many thousands out there and I don’t think anybody can suggest that our late monarch didn’t deserve that send-off, given the duty and the selfless

service that she committed to over 70 years.”

No date has been fixed for the coronation of Charles, Donelan added.

That event will return the spotlight to Westminster Abbey and to debate over whether the new king can play the same unifying role his mother did.

But with the departure of the only monarch most Britons have ever known, attention was turning back to the country’s soaring inflation problem and the crisis stemming from Russia’s war in Ukraine.

There are also deeper fissures over the very future of the United Kingdom, as Scotland’s nationalist government agitates for another referendum on independence, and as Northern Ireland turns majority-Catholic for the first time.

“Is it possible that in the Windsor vault now lies buried the person who, more than any other, served to cohere these islands?” commentator Jonathan Freedland wrote in The Guardian newspaper.

“The last 10 days have been a holiday from the usual political polarisation: admiration for the queen was one of the few things most people could agree on,” he said.

“If that turns out to have been the magic of Elizabeth, rather than the Crown, then it’s not clear how long there will be a United Kingdom for Charles to reign over.”

For most UK media, the focus remained on the unquestionable grandeur with which the country and the world bade adieu to Elizabeth.

“An outpouring of love,” the Daily Telegraph headlined, above a picture of Charles draping military colours held in life by his mother over her coffin in Windsor Castle. — AFP



A photograph taken in London on Tuesday, shows the front pages of British newspapers a day after the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II. — AFP

sport

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Germany players warm up during a training session, two days before the Uefa Nations League Group 3 match between Germany and Hungary, at the DFB campus in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany. – AFP



France players take part in a training session in Clairefontaine-en-Yvelines as part of the team's preparation for the upcoming Uefa Nations League matches. – AFP

NATIONS LEAGUE GAMES OFFER LAST CHANCE TO PREPARE FOR WORLD CUP

PARIS: A hectic schedule of club football ahead of the World Cup is interrupted this week as national teams get a last chance to fine-tune their preparations before travelling to Qatar for the start of the tournament on November 20.

Holding the World Cup in the middle of the European season is having major consequences for clubs but also for coaches of national teams.

While domestic competitions bear the brunt of the upheaval to the calendar as they are forced to halt a week before the opening game in Qatar, that also means there will be next to no time for squads to work together before beginning their World Cup campaigns.

Extra importance is therefore placed on events over the next week, as European sides complete the Uefa Nations League group stage while other contenders play friendly matches, including back-to-back games for Brazil on French soil against Ghana and Tunisia.

FRENCH CONCERNS

Reigning world champions France are preparing to defend the crown they won in Russia in 2018 while simultaneously trying to avoid being relegated from the top tier of the Nations League.

Les Bleus, who won the Nations League last year, host Austria on Thursday and visit Denmark on Sunday needing to win both games to be sure of remaining in League A.

But France coach Didier

Deschamps has numerous issues, not least injuries to key players including Paul Pogba -- he is recovering from a knee operation which has left him facing a race against time to be fit for Qatar.

"He will do everything to try to be fit as quickly as possible, despite the lack of time," Deschamps told broadcaster TF1 on Sunday.

It is also too early to say if a dispute between Kylian Mbappe and the French Football Federation over image rights could impact squad morale, with the Paris Saint-Germain star refusing to take part in a photo shoot on Monday.

France's latest squad features several new faces who are hoping to seize their chance to impress before final lists must be submitted to Fifa by November 13.

ENGLAND CALL UP TONEY

England manager Gareth Southgate has handed an opportunity to Brentford forward Ivan Toney as the Euro 2020 runners-up play Italy and Germany in Nations League A3.

Like France, England suffered a series of poor results in June and so realistically need to win both of these games to avoid relegation to League B. But Southgate will run the rule over an expanded 28-man squad with Qatar in mind.

"Part of the rationale is that we are very close to a World Cup and we feel, although our results were disappointing in the summer, we have picked on the basis of form and capability over a long period," Southgate said last week. — AFP



Sultanate of Oman
MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH
TENDERS ANNOUNCEMENT

MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH, Muscat, hereby give notice of tenders for the following projects:-

Tender No.	Project Category	Location	Fees R.O.	Grade in Tender Board Registration
21/2022	Services	CLEANING SERVICES TO ENTIRE CAMPUS AND FACILITIES TO MINISTRY'S VARIOUS BUILDINGS AT MUSCAT GOVERNORATE FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 st JANUARY 2023 TO 31 st DECEMBER 2023	25/-	Excellent Grade
22/2022	Services	MAINTENANCE OF LANDSCAPING WORKS TO MINISTRY'S CAMPUSES IN MUSCAT GOVERNORATE FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 st JANUARY 2023 TO 31 st DECEMBER 2023	25/-	First Grade
23/2022	Electromechanical and Telecommunications Contracting and Maintenance	MAINTENANCE & OPERATION OF ELECTRO-MECHANICAL AND AIR-CONDITIONING UNITS TO MINISTRY'S VARIOUS BUILDINGS IN MUSCAT GOVERNORATE FOR THE PERIOD OF 1 st JANUARY 2023 TO 31 st DECEMBER 2023	25/-	First Grade

Companies, which are registered with the Tender Board and engaged in same category with experience in and same Grade as noted above, can obtain the Tender Documents at the Tender Board E-tendering digital portal link (<http://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om>) until 04/10/2022.

The last date of tender submission on above E-tendering site 31/10/2022 at 9:00am

A Tender Bond equivalent to 1% of the tender sum issued from a registered bank, in the prescribed form, in Sultanate of Oman and valid for 90 days should enclosed with the tender.

Any tender without the bond will be reject and the tender committee is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender received.

INTERNAL TENDER COMMITTEE OF MINISTRY OF CULTURE, SPORTS and YOUTH

Any participants have doubt in adopting e-tendering can contact over the phone 24402200 or through email etenderhd@ita.gov.om

Women riders all set for Jordan GP

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

Oman women's team for tent pegging will participate in the International Women's Championship (Grand Prix), to be hosted by Jordan from September 21 to 25 in Petra, with the participation of 28 contestants from 14 countries.

Sultanate of Oman, Jordan, Sudan, Russia, Belarus, Britain, Kuwait, Kazakhstan, Norway, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia will compete for the honours.

The Oman team includes Ghanima bint Abdullah al Shukaili, Turkiah bint Mahmoud al Balushi and Amal bint Abdullah al Maskari. The Oman delegation includes Mohammed bin Salem al Maliki as the team manager, Hilal bin Hassan al Balushi as the coach, and Khamis bin Khadabakhsh al Balushi as the mission officer. The contestants underwent an intensive camp for more than three weeks at Al Rahba Farm in Barka.

The tournament has scheduled the first day for the first round of the championship



(singles spear, doubles spear). On the second day, the second round of the championship (singles sword, double sword) will be held. The third and final round for a wedge field with a spear for the individual and a wedge with a sword for the individual will be held on the last day.

Ahmed bin Saif al Abri, Secretary-

General and Chairman of the Competitions Committee of the Oman Equestrian Federation (OEF), said, "The federation has completed preparations for the tournament, which is supervised by the International Tent Pegging Federation and organised by the Royal Jordanian Equestrian Federation."

Alcaraz puts Spain into Davis Cup quarters

PARIS: World number one Carlos Alcaraz sealed Spain's berth in the Davis Cup quarterfinals on Sunday by beating South Korea's Kwon Soon-woo in straight sets.

US Open champion Alcaraz won 6-4, 7-6 (7/1) against his 74th-ranked opponent at home in Valencia, after Roberto Bautista Agut had earlier beaten Hong Seong-Chan 6-1, 6-3.

After their surprise 2-1 loss to Canada on Friday, in which Alcaraz lost to Canadian Felix Auger-Aliassime, the Spaniards won in the singles against South Korea. "Playing the Davis Cup here is an honour for me," Alcaraz told the crowd after the match. "But it's even better to come here being No 1 in the world and US Open champion, to share this moment with all my people, my family, my friends."

First in Group B ahead of Canada, the Spaniards will meet Croatia in the quarterfinals in November, in front of their home crowd in Malaga. Serbia, in third, have been eliminated.

In Hamburg, Germany took the top spot in Group C ahead of Australia after doubles pairing Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz's 6-4, 6-4 victory over Matthew Ebden and Max Purcell.

That gave the hosts a 2-1 victory.

In singles, Thanasi Kokkinakis beat Oscar Otte 7-6 (8/6), 6-1 to keep Australia in the tie after Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff eased past Purcell 6-1, 7-5.

Germany and Australia had already secured the top two spots in Group C with wins over France and Belgium earlier in the group stage.

The Germans next meet Canada and Australia play the Netherlands.



Spain's Carlos Alcaraz returns the ball to Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime during the group stage men's singles match between Spain and Canada of the Davis Cup tournament at the Fuente San Luis Sports Hall in Valencia. — AFP

The Dutch finished the group stage undefeated in their Group D, where Andy Murray's Britain claimed third place by beating Kazakhstan with difficulty after the doubles on Sunday where each set was a tie-break as Joe Salisbury and Neal Skupski edged Alexander Bublik and Aleksandr Nedovyesov 7-6 (7/2), 6-7 (9/11), 7-6 (7/4).

In Bologna, Croatia advanced to the last eight thanks to Italy's 2-1 win over Sweden in Group A.

Croatia, finalists of the 2021 edition, had started the competition with a heavy 3-0 loss to Italy before reacting against Sweden (2-1) and then Argentina (3-0). The Croatian team took second place, qualifying behind Italy, while Sweden, third, were eliminated.



Australia's Thanasi Kokkinakis in action during his match against Germany's Oscar Otte. — Reuters

Italy, who finished the group stage unbeaten and had already qualified, will next face the United States, who finished second in Group D behind the Netherlands. — AFP

Results from Davis Cup final group phase matches on Sunday:

Group A

In Bologna, Italy
Italy 2 Sweden 1
Matteo Berrettini (ITA) bt Elias Ymer (SWE) 6-4, 6-4
Mikael Ymer (SWE) bt Jannik Sinner (ITA) 6-4, 3-6, 6-3
Simone Bolelli (ITA)/Fabio Fognini (ITA) bt Andre Göransson (SWE)/Dragos Nicolae Madaras (SWE) 7-6 (7/1), 6-2

Group B

In Valencia, Spain
Spain 3 South Korea 0
Roberto Bautista (ESP) bt Hong Seong-Chan (KOR) 6-1, 6-3
Carlos Alcaraz (ESP) bt Kwon Soonwoo (KOR) 6-4, 7-6 (7/1)
Marcel Granollers (ESP)/Pedro Martínez (ESP) bt Ji Sung Nam (KOR)/Min-Kyu Song (KOR) 7-5, 3-6, 6-1

Group C

In Hamburg, Germany
Germany 2 Australia 1
Jan-Lennard Struff (GER) bt Max Purcell (AUS) 6-1, 7-5
Thanasi Kokkinakis (AUS) bt Oscar Otte (GER) 7-6 (8/6), 6-1
Kevin Krawietz (GER)/Tim Pütz (GER) bt Matthew Ebden (AUS)/Max Purcell (AUS) 6-4, 6-4

Group D

In Glasgow:
Great Britain 2 Kazakhstan 1
Andy Murray (SCO) bt Dmitry Popko (KAZ) 6-4, 6-3
Alexander Bublik (KAZ) bt Cameron Norrie (GBR) 6-4, 6-3
Joe Salisbury (GBR)/Neal Skupski (ENG) bt Alexander Bublik (KAZ)/Aleksandr Nedovyesov (KAZ) 7-6 (7/2), 6-7 (9/11), 7-6 (7/4)

Quarterfinal draw

Italy v United States

Germany v Canada

Australia v Netherlands

Spain v Croatia

Note: Quarterfinals to be played in Malaga, Spain in November



AKCT emerge champions in MTCL tournament

KABEER YOUSUF

@skabeeryousef

AKCT won the 32-team MTCL one-day cricket tournament title after defeating Ruwi Smashers in the final held at the Al Amerat Stadium on November 9. The tennis-ball tournament was organised by Muscat Tennis Cricket League (MTCL) with support from the Oman Cricket.

This is the first time that a complete tennis ball cricket tournament is being held at an international cricket stadium in Oman.

The tournament, held with the participation of most of the leading clubs in Muscat was a grant success for the overwhelming

response from across the country.

Earlier, MTCL was the first to host the final of the Tennis Ball Cricket League at the Oman Academy Cricket Stadium in Al Amerat this year. On September 9, the tournament started at 6 am with 32 teams vying in the knockout matches held at the two international grounds of Oman Cricket Academy.

The popular MTCL is managed by Shaheer KC, Mohammed Rafi and Anuraj Rajan. A 25-member volunteers' team put their effort to make the event a huge success. It was an unforgettable day for all the cricketers and cricket lovers in Muscat.

The tournament which was noted for the presence of Oman

cricket team captain Zeeshan Maqsood and all-rounder Khurram Khan adjudged AKCT's Bilal Malik as 'the man of the tournament', while Ruwi Smasher's Althaf Muhammad was named the best batsman of the tournament and Hampton Cricket Club's Zeeshan Rana the best bowler.

MTCL official Shaheer KC mentioned of bringing the tennis ball cricket to international levels in Oman, as the organisers were advancing with the aim of forming a club in collaboration with the Oman Cricket.

"We expect everyone's cooperation in the upcoming tournaments and will bring tennis ball cricket to greater heights," Shahir KC added.

Ban on saliva to shine cricket balls made permanent by ICC

DUBAI: A temporary ban on using saliva to shine cricket balls was on Tuesday made permanent by the International Cricket Council.

And the running out of the non-striker will no longer be classed under 'unfair play' after a raft of rule changes from October 1 were endorsed by a meeting of the ICC chief executives' committee.

Next month's T20 World Cup in Australia will be the first major tournament to be played under the new playing conditions.

The ICC said the ban on saliva to shine one side of the ball to help it swing through the air, brought in May 2020 as a temporary measure to prevent coronavirus transmission, would stay.

"The ban on saliva use has been in place for over two years in international cricket as a Covid-related temporary measure and it is considered appropriate for the ban to be made permanent," an ICC statement said.

The controversial running out of a non-striker encroaching out of his crease by the bowler is now legitimised after being moved from the 'Unfair Play' section of the rules to the 'Run Out' section.

"Running out a non-striker for backing up too much will now be considered as a regular run out," the ICC said.

The dismissal was famously dubbed a 'Mankad' named



after India bowler who ran out Australia batsman Bill Brown in the 1948 Sydney Test.

But bowlers will no longer be allowed to attempt to run out the striker by advancing down the wicket before entering their delivery stride and throwing at

the stumps. If they make such an attempt, it will be called a dead ball.

Other rule changes see the new batter having to face the next ball at the striker's end.

"Previously, in case the batters crossed before a catch was taken, the new batter would be at the non-striker's end," ICC said.

The time taken by an incoming batter to take strike in Tests and one-day internationals is now reduced from three minutes to two while in T20 internationals it remains at 90 seconds.

One of the other new rules says if fielders make any unfair and deliberate movements while the bowler is running in to bowl, the batting side can be awarded five penalty runs.

Another change allows the use of hybrid pitches at all men's and women's one-day and Twenty20 internationals. Hybrid pitches, a blend of natural grass with artificial turf, have only been previously used in women's T20 internationals. — AFP

KEY DECISIONS

1. Saliva permanently banned
2. New batter to take strike
3. Running out of the non-striker legal
4. Two minutes to take strike in ODI and Test instead of 3 mins
5. 5 runs penalty for unfair field movement
6. Over-rate penalty in ODI
7. No-ball for leaving the field



Naomi Osaka of Japan hits a return against Daria Saville of Australia during their singles match on day two of the Pan Pacific Open tournament in Tokyo. — AFP

‘Scared’ Osaka advances in Pan Pacific

S A V I L L E R E T I R E S W I T H K N E E I N J U R Y , P L I S K O V A T H R O U G H

TOKYO: Naomi Osaka said she felt “really scared” after watching opponent Daria Saville collapse with a knee injury just seven minutes into their Pan Pacific Open match in Tokyo on Tuesday. Australian Saville retired from their first-round encounter after hurting her left knee hitting a cross-court forehand in the second game of the match. The world number 55 yelled out “my knee” before dropping to

the ground in agony, and Osaka rushed over to her side of the court to check on her opponent. Saville, 28, retired from the match after several minutes of treatment and Osaka, who has struggled with injury herself this year, said she felt “really sad” for her opponent. “I thought that she was just yelling because she thought her forehand was out, then I realised that she was yelling because she

was in pain,” said the former world number one, who is aiming to break a slump in form this week in Tokyo. “Then I got really scared because I felt like as athletes we have a pretty high pain tolerance. It seemed really bad.” Saville eventually got up and walked over to her chair, but she retired after testing her knee with several footwork exercises. Osaka said she thought Saville

was “going to be OK”, adding that she was “a fighter”. Osaka, who was on break point at 30-40 in the second game after holding her serve in the first game, will play Brazil’s Beatriz Haddad Maia in the second round on Thursday. “Right now, it still feels a bit weird that I just won a match — I feel like I didn’t win a match,” said Osaka, who has lost in the first round at her last three

tournaments. “I guess that I did and I’m progressing through the tournament. I’m not really thinking too much about the final right now.” Osaka is the defending Pan Pacific Open champion, although the tournament is being played for the first time since 2019 because of the pandemic. Earlier in the day, 2020 Australian Open champion Sofia

Kenin of the United States lost 7-6 (9/7), 6-4 to Mexican qualifier Fernanda Contreras Gomez in the first round. Kenin also reached the French Open final in 2020 but she has since dropped to 315 in the world rankings after struggling with injury. Number six seed Karolina Pliskova, a two-time Grand Slam finalist, beat Bulgarian qualifier Isabella Shinikova 6-2, 6-1. —AFP

Ronaldo’s Portugal team-mate Rafa Silva quits international duty

BERLIN: Cristiano Ronaldo’s Portugal team-mate Rafa Silva has retired from international football having made 25 appearances for his country. Benfica forward Silva was part of the squads that won Euro 2016 and the 2018-19 Nations League, while he was also called up for the 2014 World Cup and Euro 2020. An impressive start to the club season, in which he has scored four goals in seven league matches, earned him a call-up for Portugal’s upcoming Nations League fixtures against Czech Republic and Spain. But the 29-year-old has instead retired from international football, stating he was calling it quits for “personal reasons” and describing it as an “honest and right decision.” Silva went on to say: “The



national team will continue to bring joy to the Portuguese, from the very beginning in the League of Nations and the 2022 World Cup.” The Portuguese Football Federation added: “The FPF Board respects the decision taken by Rafa, who with us lived the two biggest achievements of the national team, Euro 2016 and the League of Nations. “Rafa will forever be one of ours and he deserves our recognition and thanks.” — dpa

Oman to take part in West Asian Billiards and Snooker in Bahrain

WALEED AL JAHWARI
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

The Oman Billiards and Snooker Committee has chosen the national team players participating in the West Asian Championship and the combined Arab Championship for Billiards and Snooker, which will be held in Bahrain from October 14 to 29. The qualifiers were selected from the billiards classification tournament that was held in Hall 888 in the Wilayat of Seeb, and the snooker tournament that was held at the Billiards Hall in Al Khuwair. The classification tournament recorded strong competitions between 34 participants, including 22 players in billiards, and 12 players in snooker, who competed to reach the list of the Oman national team that will participate in the two tournaments. Mubarak al Wahaibi and Malik al Nabhani qualified to represent Oman national team in the snooker competitions, while Abdullah al Raisi and Abdul Rahman al Ma’ashani



qualified to represent the billiards team. On this occasion, Hammoud bin Hamdan al Harthy, Secretary of the Committee, said, “It is necessary to pay attention to young people and new talents, as a plan was adopted to

select young people. Our professional national coach has extensive experience in managing the course of the game, in accordance with the relevant international rules and standards, and has the expertise to pick the young talents.”

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Plan to equip 10,000 young Omanis with digital skills by 2025

QASIM AL MAASHANI
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

Within the framework of activities marking ‘Muscat: The Arab Capital 2022’, the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, represented by the Directorate General for Stimulating Future Skills, inaugurated on Tuesday, September 20, 2022, the National Initiative to Qualify Digital Competencies (Makeen).

The initiative seeks to qualify national cadres with employable skills in communications and information technology, thereby enabling them to pursue rewarding livelihoods in Oman’s digital sector.

The programme, envisioned as part of the Ministry’s objectives in the 10th five-year plan, will be delivered through partnerships with educational institutions specialising in the ICT sector. A key goal is to qualify 10,000 Omanis for employment opportunities in the digital arena by 2025.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Dr Ali bin Amer al



Shaithani (pictured), Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, described the Makeen programme as key to supporting the professional development of young Omanis.

The inauguration ceremony included the signing of a

Memorandum of Understanding with some specialised companies to establish an electronic platform for the Makeen initiative. An MoU was also signed with Tech Mahindra to provide training around the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Separately, the Ministry signed an MoU with Cisco to provide supporting infrastructure for the delivery of the programme.

A 4th MoU was signed between Sultan Qaboos University, Omantel and the Ministry of Education to support the implementation of Oman Programming Competition.

Supporting the Ministry in the delivery of the initiative are a number of public and private sector organisations, including Omantel, Oman LNG, Huawei, SAP and Middle East College.

China is top market for Oman crude in August

JOMAR MENDOZA
[@JmObserver](#)

China accounted for 84 per cent of Oman’s total crude exports of 26 million barrels in August 2022, a slight decrease of 0.9 per cent from the previous month, the Ministry of Energy and Minerals said in a report.

India was the next leading market with a share of 10 per cent, followed by Japan (4 per cent) and Thailand (2 per cent).

The average total production of crude oil and oil condensates in the Sultanate of Oman for the month of August 2022 amounted to about 1.09 million barrels per day (bpd), an increase of 0.7 per cent compared to the previous month.

Crude oil production climbed 16.6 per cent in August 2022 compared to the same period last year. Production of crude and oil condensates totalled 34 million barrels in August



2022.

The average price of Oman’s Crude Oil Futures Contract on the Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME) slumped 9.4 per cent in August compared to the previous month. The monthly official selling price for Oman Crude oil for October 2022 delivery (traded during August 2022) averaged \$97.00 a barrel, which was lower by \$6.21 compared to the July 2022 selling price, which was \$103.21 a barrel.

Meanwhile, natural gas production averaged 148.6 million cubic metres per day in August 2022, an increase by 1.5 per cent compared to the average production in July 2022 (146.4 m3/day) and an increase of 11.7 per cent compared to August of 2021.

Oman to repurpose gas pipelines to transport hydrogen

Ambitious plans: Feasibility study for blending hydrogen into gas networks currently nearing completion

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, SEPT 20

With the Sultanate of Oman moving stridently towards a green hydrogen-based low carbon energy future, the owner and operator of the country’s massive gas pipeline system, OQ Gas Networks (OQGN), is gearing up to suitably upgrade the gas grid to transport hydrogen as well.

According to top officials of OQ Gas Networks, a subsidiary of Oman’s global integrated energy group OQ, significant business and growth opportunities will be unlocked for the company when mega green hydrogen projects begin to materialise in the Sultanate of Oman in the coming years.

As the monopoly operator of the country’s roughly 4,000 km-long gas pipeline system, OQ Gas Networks is expected to play a frontline role in the delivery of hydrogen – Blue or Green – to



“**OQ Gas Networks is expected to play a frontline role in the delivery of hydrogen – Blue or Green – to customers distributed around the country. To this end, it has begun testing the network for its readiness to transport hydrogen**

MANSOOR BIN ALI AL ABDALI

Managing Director, OQGN

customers distributed around the country. To this end, it has begun “testing the network for its readiness to transport hydrogen”, said Mansoor bin Ali al Abdali, Managing Director.

Speaking at an investor forum hosted by Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) recently, he said a feasibility study for blending hydrogen into existing natural gas networks is now in its final stages. Hydrogen transportation costs would be significantly lower for repurposed pipelines compared to investments in new networks, he noted.

Initial blending efforts involving the use of hydrogen at low percentages have been “promising.”

Gulf Drilling First in Oman to Get API Q2 Edition 2

Gulf Drilling LLC (GD), the Drilling arm of Mohammed Al Barwani Petroleum Services, has become the first Oil and Gas Service Company in Oman to receive the newly updated American Petroleum Institute (API) Q 2 Edition 2 certification, a prestigious quality certification which is quickly becoming the new go-to standard for oil and gas companies worldwide.

Salim Al Harthy, CEO of MBPS Worldwide, said: “This certificate is significant because the API is one of the highest global standards in our field. Oil and gas clients across the world are adopting it as their requirement. Getting the API Q2 at this stage means that we are very well positioned to support Oman’s Oil and Gas companies and drive the Omani economy forward. Additionally, it highlights Oman’s local competencies and our professionalism in the global market. The Q2 was also a requirement for Wave II mobilization of our drilling contract with PDO.

By achieving it we have demonstrated our commitment towards our clients.”

“Receiving this certification took us 18 months for the preparatory work. Many companies around the world are capable of implementing their own internal standards, but fitting the global standard is a rigorous practice. I am proud of our collective efforts and management support towards the common goal.”

MBPS is one of only 62 companies worldwide which received the spec 2 certification as of this date. API certifies oil and gas service providers for the safety, consistency and interchangeability of their products.

Mr. Rejoy Shamsudeen, QHSSE Manager for MBPS Worldwide, said: “API Specification Q2 is the world’s most advanced industry certification standard for oil and natural gas service providers and is only awarded to facilities that can demonstrate the highest quality of outcomes including competency of personnel,



systems, and processes. In order to receive this certification, Gulf Drilling needed to make remarkable changes to almost all its processes to fit the API Q2 standard, and to create new procedures. This included training our people including +500 Omanis in the worksites to the new standards.

Salim Al Harthy added: “The Q2 certification is in line with our own commitment to focus on being methodical and system-driven, and to be the preferred oilfield service provider in the region.”

Bank Muscat to provide advanced training to Omani entrepreneurs

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, in line with its vision “To serve you better, everyday”, and commitment to supporting the Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) sector in Oman, has signed an agreement with Radiant Sail, a leading management consultant and business advisory services provider based in the Sultanate of Oman.

The agreement was signed by Ibrahim bin Khamis al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager — SME, Bank Muscat, and Nathan Heckman, President, Radiant Sail, and will help the bank provide an advanced entrepreneurial programme to 30 top graduates of the bank’s Al Wathbah SME Academy as part of its CSR programmes.

The central theme of the advanced Al Wathbah Academy Programme is to support SMEs to present their business in a structured format to potential investors, partners and employees. Every module of the Advanced Al Wathbah Academy Programme is designed around this central theme and provides participants with an opportunity to master a variety of skills and practice life-long learning.

The programme, which will be



conducted in two batches of 15 participants each in Muscat and in Al Batinah North, will be managed by Radiant Sail and certified through KnowledgeWorkx.

Study materials were developed based on curriculum from the Harvard Business School, local case studies and in-person testimonials from Omani entrepreneurs, who have pitched their businesses successfully across the world.

Participants will receive training through a combination of workshops and one-to-one coaching throughout the programme. The workshops will be interactive, and are facilitated by leading professionals, who are entrepreneurs themselves and able to explain the relevant lessons with excellent real-world examples.

Ibrahim Khamis al Balushi, Senior Assistant General Manager — SME, Bank Muscat, said: “We are pleased to sign this agreement with our knowledge-partner Radiant Sail to further support and develop SMEs in the Sultanate of Oman. In line with the national objective of stimulating an entrepreneurial mind-set, the bank is always focused on strategic initiatives that add tremendous value to Oman’s growth and development.

Bank Muscat is always committed to working in close partnership with the government and the private sector to support the national economy in alignment with the landmark Oman Vision 2040.”

Nathan Heckman, President,

Radiant Sail, said: “Bank Muscat’s various initiatives to provide support to SMEs are pioneering and highly sustainable initiatives, which immensely supports small businesses and Omani entrepreneurs in their journey to becoming major players in the national economy in line with the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

As a long-term knowledge partner of the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, Radiant Sail is pleased to be a part of this initiative to further upskill Omani entrepreneurial skills and contribute to the progress and growth of the nation.”

Bank Muscat’s Al Wathbah Academy for SMEs is a distinctive programme that combines global excellence with local relevance and was launched in 2014 as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative to equip Omani entrepreneurs with suitable skills.

It is conducted through 8 modules spread over a period of 4-8 months and leads to internationally-recognised certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI). Over 170 entrepreneurs from different governorates across the Sultanate of Oman are successfully contributing to the Omani economy after enrolling in entrepreneurial training.

Mazoon signs pact with Outward Bound Oman



MUSCAT: With an aim to provide fresh and healthy quality products to customers across Oman, Mazoon, the Sultanate of Oman’s flagship dairy company has signed an agreement with Outward Bound Oman to become their official dairy partner.

As part of this partnership, Mazoon Dairy will supply their refreshing range of fresh milk, juices and spreadable cheese to all the participants enrolled in Outward Bound Oman’s courses. Mazoon will serve participants at Outward Bound’s three training centres in Muscat, Al Qabil, and Al Jabal Al Akhdhar as the official dairy partners for the academic year 2022/2023.

Furthermore, both Mazoon Dairy and Outward Bound Oman will team up to support the local community in the Al Buraimi Governorate by offering training courses for students in the Wilayat. With summer in full swing, Mazoon’s refreshing range

of fresh fruit juices, milk and flavoured milk delights are the healthiest way to stay cool and hydrated.

Not only are Mazoon’s fruit juice and milk products rich in essential vitamins, but they’re an easy, on the go source of energy. In addition to producing high-quality products for the Sultanate of Oman, and raising the local dairy industry standards to support and develop the same, Mazoon Dairy is dedicated to playing a key role in creating sustainable communities throughout Oman and the GCC.

Established in Oman in May 2009 by founding partners Dentons, Shell and Suhail Bahwan, and supported by many of the leading corporates in Oman as part of their social investment programmes, Outward Bound Oman is part of an international network that uses challenging outdoor journeys to develop the national talent of Oman.

OTE offers 5-day mega warehouse sale



MUSCAT: For a limited time only, OTE Group’s immensely popular warehouse sale is back again, this time around with fabulous discounts of up to 70 per cent on a wide array of consumer electronics and home appliance brands from the world’s leading manufacturers.

The five-day-long blowout sale — the biggest of its kind in the consumer retail space here in the Sultanate of Oman — begins on Wednesday, September 21 and concludes on Sunday, September 25. The venue is the LG warehouse at Ghala (next

to the OTE Service Centre Complex), where a multitude of items is up for grabs at attractive discounts ranging from 20 – 70 per cent.

On display amid the expansive settings of the LG warehouse is a vast inventory of merchandise, ranging from television sets, air-conditions, IT products, audio-visual devices, and assorted other home appliances. They represent some of the choicest offerings from world-class brands LG and Bosch, distributed exclusively by Oman Gulf Enterprises, an affiliate of OTE Group.

Alizz Islamic Bank CEO honours top employees

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank’s CEO, Sulaiman al Harthy, honoured the top performing staff during the first half of the current year in a ceremony held at the bank’s head office in Ruwi, in the presence of members of the executive management team.

The CEO thanked the employees for their outstanding achievements, urging them to keep up the good work during the few remaining months of the current year, and assured them that achievements will always be rewarded.

He noted that the most important thing is how to sustain such good performance and build on it to help the Bank become the first and optimal choice for all customers. This is feasible only by offering the highest quality Shari’a-compliant products & services and products.

Al Harthy commended the employees who demonstrate a high sense of responsibility, confirming that the bank’s senior management has always focused on the importance of recognising achievers and exemplary talents, and will always offer them support to grow and thrive.

The CEO further commended the achievements made by the various



departments and sections, encouraging the employees to push further towards the bank’s strategic objectives and to stay informed of the latest updates in the Islamic banking industry now more than ever. Alizz Islamic Bank has received several awards in appreciation of its outstanding banking services and products, which reflects the Bank’s good understanding of the market requirements and needs.

Since inception back in 2013, the bank has made investments in the community it operates in as one of its key priorities along with investments in education, youth development and increased awareness of Islamic finance as a proven way towards social

welfare. Additionally, the bank strives to help customers across Oman by giving them access to convenient and Shari’a-compliant banking services.

Moreover, organisational development has been one of the key strategic focuses for Alizz Islamic Bank over the past two years with a strong belief that the human capital is a key driver of the organisation’s overall growth. Several inter-departmental meetings were held to understand employee needs and aspirations.

Accordingly, many programmes were introduced to enhance the employees’ capacity to make a positive change and increase efficiency. These programmes involved improving strategies, structures and processes in order to increase the chances of impact and contribution to the Bank’s objectives, boost productivity and financial awareness.

On the other hand, the Bank’s infrastructure was developed to provide the clients with innovative financial solutions and high-quality customer service across various channels of communication like the website, Internet banking, mobile banking, SMS, call centre, ITM, ATM and branch banking services.

Oman Air names new Country Manager - Oman

MUSCAT: Oman Air, the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman, has announced the appointment of Majid bin Sulaiman al Qassabi (pictured) as its new Country Manager - Oman. An aviation veteran with a career spanning 14 years, Al Qassabi has held leadership positions at several top companies in Oman and the wider GCC region, having begun his journey at Oman Air.

On his return to the company, his new role will include managing the sales, operations and business

development in Oman, the airline’s home-base and one of its key markets.

Ahmed bin Ali al Mahrouqi, Regional Vice President - Oman & GCC, commented, “We are delighted to have Majid return to our team, whose wealth of experience is certain to add significant value to the future direction of the airline.

As Country Manager, he is anticipated to steer our new strategy to reinforce ourselves as Oman’s airline of first choice,



while continuing to stay true to our brand ethos to provide our guests with an exceptional travel experience.”

Al Qassabi has built up an impressive track record, having worked in major airlines and travel technology companies across Oman and the GCC. Most recently, he was part of the launch team for Oman’s first low-cost carrier, where he built an extensive network of B2B partnerships, both with travel agents and corporate clients.

He holds a Master’s in Business Administration (MBA) from Coventry University, UK, and a Bachelor’s degree in Tourism from

Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), Oman.

Oman Air benefits from highly experienced and qualified Omanis at every level of the company. Having achieved an Omanisation rate of 94 per cent (excluding female cabin crew), the airline provides rich and varied career development opportunities, as well as internships and graduate training programmes that expand horizons for young Omanis and boost its contribution to the national economy.



King Charles III has little time to adjust

ANDY JALIL
andyjalil@aol.com

The author our foreign correspondent based in the UK

It is just about a fortnight since Queen Elizabeth 11 died and Britain's new sovereign, King Charles 111, who had a very close relationship with his mother, has little time to grieve and adjust.

In a way, his life is only just beginning at the age of 73, as he finally takes over the role for which he has been destined since birth. His emotions must be managed and controlled as he leads the royal family in public.

Queen Elizabeth 11 reigned for longer than any monarch Britain has had. It saw a multi-generational transformation, a turning of a chapter, and now it's for the king to create the monarchy's course in this modern age.

The British monarchy is based on tradition going back to its beginning and many of its rituals are unimaginably ancient. This sense of antiquity is important: any hereditary monarchy must rely in part on the idea that it exists because it has always existed. But it also shows the need for change or development in order to survive, and most of the British monarchs have realised this and made it reality.

King Charles 111 faces a challenge on how does he make changes and modernise, while keeping the essence of tradition. There was a hint of this in his first address after Queen Elizabeth's death. He affirmed that he understood and therefore accepted, the important parameters within which he must now work.

He said: "I shall strive to follow the inspiring example I have been set in upholding constitutional government and

in the discharge of these duties I will be guided by the counsel of their elected parliaments." This would not be something new but it is important as it restates the principles on which the British system of government functions.

At the time he was heir to the throne, he would at times show a somewhat hidden annoyance at the restraints imposed on him on making comments on matters, be they political or otherwise. He has strong views on various matters, especially on environment, architecture, etc. and has not held himself back from expressing his views. Also, well known were his handwritten letters, scribbled notes to ministers and others expressing his views on matters of policy.

He knows his position has now changed and he doesn't have the same freedom. When he mentioned in his address to the nation of "the duties and heavy responsibilities of sovereignty" this is what was on his mind.

In all probability there will be a facelift of the extended royal family. He has hinted in the past that he wants a slimmed-down monarchy, with fewer members of the royal family carrying out official duties.

This will happen partly through natural wastage, he has now moved up the line and he has got Prince William, Prince Edward and Princes Anne. Prince Andrew is unlikely to return to the fore-front for as long as it takes, if at all, and the status of Harry and Meghan remains unclear for now.

Although it is very early in King Charles' reign, one can assume that he will be more remote politically, although he will be well briefed on these matters from seeing the prime minister at the palace once a week and that may well be fairly in-depth at times.

There is unlikely to be any fundamental changes in the functions of the monarchy although King Charles may have some personal preferences. He may be set in his ways, but he has learned and watched long enough to settle well into his role. He will certainly not be short on advice.

Oman-Norway Business Forum reviews trade and investment ties

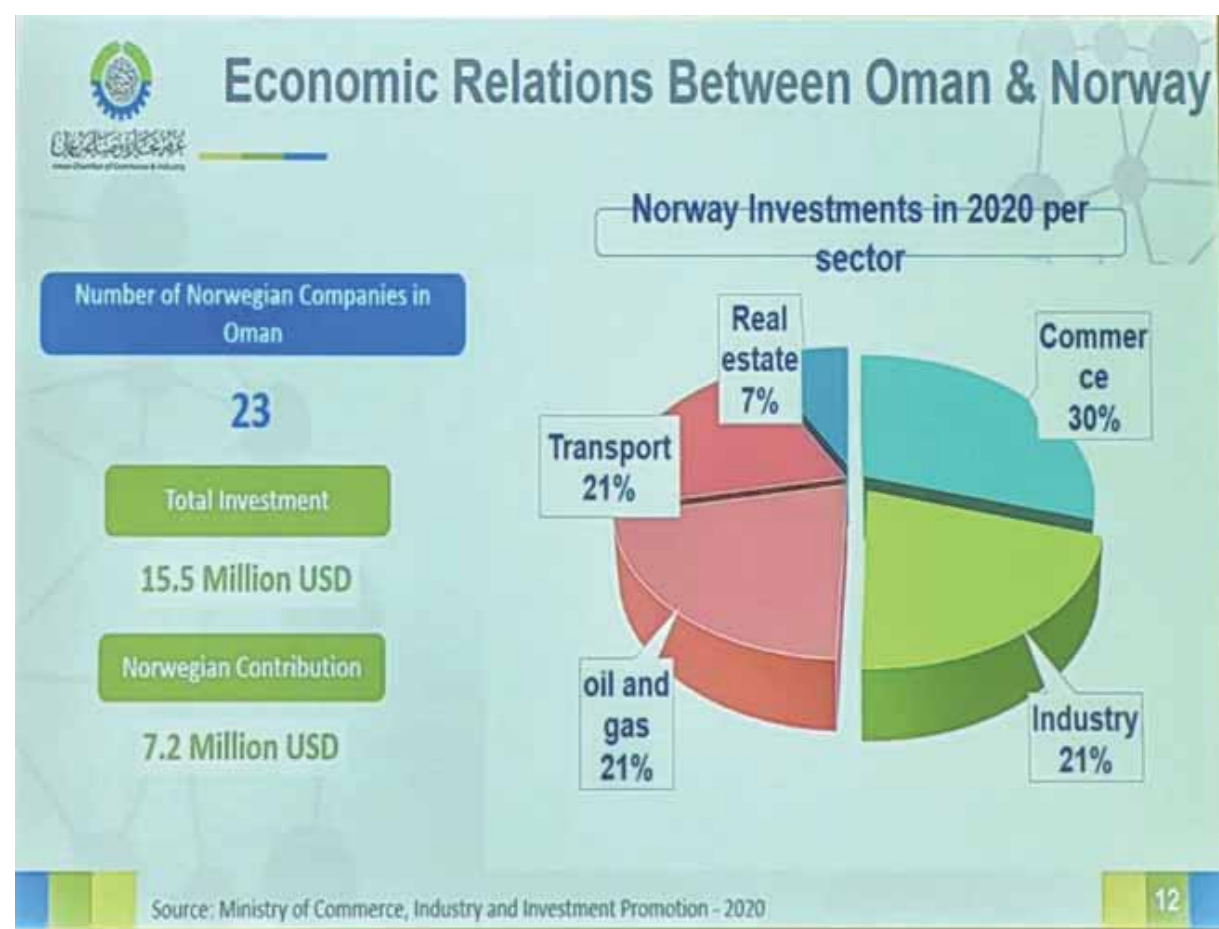
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MUSCAT, SEPT 20

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) hosted at its headquarters on September 20, 2022, the Omani-Norwegian Business Forum with the attendance of representatives of a number of Omani businesses and their counterparts from the Kingdom of Norway.

The forum aimed to discuss ways to enhance trade and investment relations between the two friendly countries, and work to establish commercial partnerships between business owners in both countries, in addition to working to increase the volume of trade exchange rates in general, and focusing on the oil and gas sectors, and energy solutions in particular.

The forum featured a number of presentations showcasing the various opportunities and capabilities of the two friendly countries. According to the Chamber, bilateral trade between the two countries climbed to RO 5.642 million in 2021, up from RO 3 million a year earlier.

At the forum, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion provided



an overview of the 'Invest in Oman' portal, while the Public Authority for the Special Economic Zone and Free Zones (OPAZ) outlined investment opportunities in the country's special economic and free zones.

Norwegian officials also highlighted the important opportunities and incentives offered by the Kingdom of Norway in various investment fields. On the sidelines of the forum, bilateral meetings were held

between Omani business owners and their counterparts from the Kingdom of Norway with the aim of exchanging experiences and identifying investment opportunities between the two countries.

Tethys Oil produces 9,898 oil barrels/day in August

MUSCAT: Tethys Oil's share of the production, before government take, from Blocks 3&4 onshore the Sultanate of Oman, in August 2022 amounted to 306,846 barrels of oil, corresponding to 9,898 barrels of oil per day (bpd).

The Official Selling Price (OSP) for Oman Export Blend Crude Oil for the month of August 2022 was \$112.93 per barrel. The OSP, as published by Sultanate of Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals, is the benchmark price for Tethys Oil's monthly oil sales excluding trading and quality adjustments.

Tethys Oil AB, through its wholly owned subsidiary Tethys Oil Block 3 & 4 Ltd, has a 30 per



cent interest in Blocks 3&4.

Partners are Mitsui E&P Middle East BV with 20 per cent and the operator CC Energy Development SAL (Oman branch) holding the remaining 50 per cent.

Oman to repurpose gas pipelines to transport hydrogen

FROM PAGE 13

Al Abdali said the study is being expanded to pinpoint any impacts for OQ Gas Networks customers further afield. The growth of this network to support hydrogen transportation also supports the goals of Oman's Vision 2040.

"We see big potential for business growth when it comes to hydrogen," added Khalid al Qassabi, Vice-President Finance, OQGN. "So we are already evaluating our network to check its capabilities to accommodate

hydrogen."

Oman has ambitions to boost hydrogen production exponentially from the equivalent of 1 gigawatt (GW) of capacity in 2025 to 10 GW by 2030, rising sharply to 30 GW by 2040.

OQ Gas Networks is among a number of public sector entities that are targeted for full or partial privatisation via Initial Public Offerings (IPO) on the Omani bourse over the next several years. The company's regulated asset base is valued at around \$2.5 billion.

Commodities drop on the darkening growth outlook



OLE S HANSEN

Leading meteorological organisations are warning about the risk of a triple-dip La Niña event spanning three northern hemisphere winters – a rare occurrence which, according to the BBC, has only occurred twice before.

Changing temperatures around the world have led to several climate emergencies in 2022, from historic flooding, above average temperatures and drought. Parts of the world are

expected to experience severe weather for the rest of the year and into 2023, as part of a rare "triple dip La Niña" event according to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

In Australia, the respected Bureau of Meteorology has declared a La Niña event is underway and communities in eastern Australia should be prepared for above-average rainfall that may lead to flooding in the coming months. In addition, South America and equatorial Africa could see a repeat of the droughts experienced during the past couple of years.

A development that could strengthen concerns about a global food crisis with inventories of several key food items falling to a multi-year low. In this chilling update, Bloomberg



takes a closer look at the rising risks associated with La Niña – events where waters in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean are cooler than normal, and waters in the western tropical Pacific Ocean are warmer than normal.

This combination causes changes in wind, cloud and pressure patterns over the

Pacific. When this change in the atmosphere combines with changes in ocean temperature, it can influence global weather patterns and climate.

These latest developments have added a sense of nervousness to the grains market, the best performing sector this month with all the three major crops

of corn, soybeans and wheat trading higher. In their latest World Supply and Demand update, the US Department of Agriculture trimmed ending stocks of US corn and soybeans to a ten and nine year low. Wheat remains supported by Putin's threat to review some aspects of the Ukraine "grain deal", which has seen seaborne exports of agriculture products resume, albeit at a much-reduced pace compared with pre-war levels.

Crude oil traded lower in the week, partly driven by losses across fuel products such as gasoline and diesel, but remained within a recently lowered range, with demand concerns once again being the main focus more than offsetting potential supply challenges in the coming months. Growth and demand

concerns, as well as the stronger dollar making the cost of fuel increasingly expensive around the world, remains the focus as the market prepares for another growth dampening rate hike from the US FOMC next week.

In addition, demand in China continues to linger after the IEA said the world's largest importer of oil was heading for its biggest annual drop in demand in more than three decades.

Meanwhile, the US Department of Energy walked back on its SPR refill stance by saying that it didn't include a strike price (that was said to be around \$80/barrel) and it isn't likely to occur until after fiscal 2023.

(The writer is Head - Commodity Strategy at Saxo Bank)

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- Should be able to liaise with the Govt. Authorities.
- Should be willing to lead team of qualified engineers.
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Important steps to conserving endangered vulture species in Oman

By Staff Reporter
Photos by Othman Al Jabri

The Environment Society of Oman, in collaboration with the Environment Authority, recently hosted international vulture experts, together with key stakeholders across Oman to discuss vulture and raptor-focused conservation within the Sultanate of Oman.

Around 16 of the 23 species of vultures found worldwide are at risk of extinction, and Oman is a stronghold for two of them, which presents the opportunity to take important steps to support their survival.

Seventy-four participants, representing over 19 different organisations (Government and non-government) came together to learn about the important vulture research ESO, the Environment Authority and other stakeholders have been undertaking and to explore the role that Oman can play in the conservation of this endangered species.

Throughout the workshop, rangers and staff from the Environment Authority, representing the various vulture breeding habitats, were able to learn about the importance of vultures to our ecosystem, and made aware of the level of international attention Oman receives from the global conservation community for

the survival of the species.

In the workshop closure, the organising team and assembled participants, agreed on the importance of drafting a national action plan for the conservation of raptors, a process which will have to be coordinated with various stakeholders.

Presentations from international vulture experts, Dr. Michael McGrady, Director of International Avian Research, André Botha, co-chair of the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group, and Dr Umberto Gallo Orsi, Programme Officer of Convention on Migratory Species Raptors MoU, highlighted the international significance of vultures, the existing global and regional conservation frame-



works and provided an overview of threats to all species in Oman, including poisoning, collision and a decline in food and habitat availability.

Dr Michael McGrady, Director, International Avian Research, said, "There is a need for cross-cutting conservation actions to address the problems our native species are facing. The first step is to increase our knowledge and understanding of the current situation and the importance of protecting the environment and the animals that have become national symbols". Saleh al Saadi, Director of Biodiversity at the Environment Authority added that, "This workshop is part of the process for raising awareness and developing a long-term strategy for conservation action and working together to provide a safe environment to protect endangered species in Oman."

Following the workshop, four Lappet-faced vultures were ringed, fitted with satellite tags and released back into the wild at Al Sareen Nature Reserve. These vultures had either been rescued from the wild as sick or injured, or confiscated from individuals keeping them illegally. The released vultures will be closely

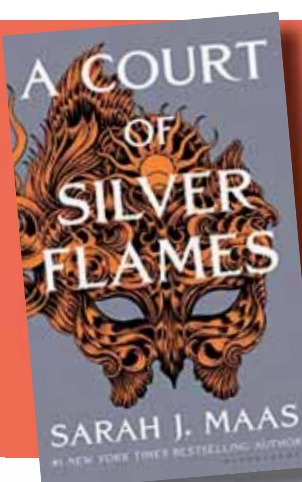
monitored to observe their movements and behaviour to ensure they reacclimatise to the wild successfully. Suaad al Harthy, Executive Director of ESO, said, "Releasing wild species into the wild is always linked to a high level of uncertainty, especially if they have been kept in captivity for a long time. If they successfully adapt back into the wild, the four vultures will contribute to the replenishment of the species. As we track their movements and habits, we hope to understand more about them to benefit the species as a whole. There is, unfortunately, still an active trade in illegally-caught animals and we will continue to work with the Environment Authority in Oman and other stakeholders to ensure more animals can live freely in their natural habitats and contribute to the conservation efforts in Oman and across the region." The workshop and vulture release undertaken last week are both part of ESO's 'Chasing Oman's Endangered Vulture Populations' project, funded by the Disney Conservation Fund. This project forms part of ESO's larger Raptor Research and Conservation Programme initiated in 2012.

READ

A COURT OF SILVER FLAMES

BY SARAH J. MAAS

The fifth book in the Court of Thorns and Roses series. Nesta Archeron is forced into close quarters with a warrior named Cassian.



FASHION TREND

Models present creations during the EFTYCHIA catwalk show for the Spring/Summer 2023 collection on the fourth day of London Fashion Week in London. — AFP



LIVE STREAMING IN A BAR

Patrons watching a band perform in a studio via a live stream, at music venue 'The Wanch' in Hong Kong. A thundering thrash metal riff reverberates through a Hong Kong bar but the music is being live streamed from a studio across town to obey pandemic rules that have outlawed small gigs for more than 650 days. — AFP





Drought decimates Texas' key cotton crop

ON SUTTON PAGE'S ravaged cotton fields, there is almost nothing left to pick. The Texas farmer managed to salvage maybe a fifth of his crop, but the rest was lost to the severe drought that has taken a steep toll across the region.

This year, his harvest is "not well," he says, but in reality, the drought in northern Texas has proven to be a disaster, with most of Page's neighbours not even bothering to harvest their crop, leaving "bare, bare fields."

Texas produces almost half of America's cotton, and the United States is the world's third largest supplier, behind India and China.

This year, national production will hit its lowest level since 2015, down 21 per cent year-on-year, and Texas will suffer a 58 per cent drop, the US Department of Agriculture estimates.

In the northwest of the state, where cotton is the lifeline of the local economy and water is scarce, the 2022 harvest "could be one of the worst in 30 years," worries Darren Hudson, professor of agricultural economics at Texas Tech University.

With the cascading consequences for the global textile industry, in an economy already reeling from the pandemic, Hudson put the likely economic impact for the region at \$2 billion.

Landon Orman, 30, works on 2,000 acres of cotton near Abilene, three hours west of Dallas. His non-irrigated cotton did not even sprout, while his partially watered crop grew but its yield will be slashed by half.

In total, he predicts an 85 per cent drop in production compared to a normal year. Like so many others, he has crop insurance, so "financially we're not really doing that bad. But as a farmer, it sucks pretty bad that we can't grow stuff sometimes."

DEPRESSING

In Lubbock, the region's cotton hub, rainfall over the past 12 months has roughly been half its normal volume, and what little fell came too late to save the crop.

"Starting in January, all the way to the month of May, no, no literally no rain," said Sutton



Page, 48. And from May "we started having 100 degree days and 30 mile an hour winds and it just dried everything out."

He had to plow 80 per cent of his dying crop back into the ground to stop the land drying out. Of the few small plants that actually grew, it may not even be economical to harvest them.

"It's a little depressing to some degree, because you work hard all year and you get to get the farms ready and you fertilise and, and your crop doesn't come up," he said.

FREQUENCY

Cotton farmers in the plains of Texas know there will always be bad years, but the drought of 2022 could be the worst yet. And some worry there could be more on the way.

The region is "seeing worse conditions than this time last year," and these are settling in over time, notes Curtis Riganti, a climatologist specialising in



drought.

"In the past 10 years, we saw maybe five or six of those years where we saw drought. Maybe one or two of those years we saw a very catastrophic drought," said Kody Bessent, director of one of the region's cotton growers' associations.

These farmers in Texas, a state where climate scepticism abounds, prefer to see unpredictable weather cycles repeating themselves rather than the effects of global warming, which makes extreme weather events more common.

While waiting for answers, everyone is trying their best just to maintain humidity in their soil. — **AFP**

ENTERTAINMENT

Benin welcomes Hollywood take on women warriors



BENIN'S HISTORIC female warriors known as the Amazons of Dahomey are legendary across West Africa, but a Hollywood production is bringing them back into the limelight.

The Woman King, released last Friday and shown at one of Cotonou's few cinemas on Saturday, is inspired by the story of the Agojie women who protected the ancient Kingdom of Dahomey and fought against French colonial troops in the 19th century.

The main character General Nanisca is played by the Oscar-winning American actress Viola Davis, who trains the next generation of recruits against a rival African kingdom and European slave traders.

The production directed by Gina Prince-Bythewood and mainly filmed in South Africa has won praise for its leading roles for black actresses, but has also generated criticism that it glorifies slavery.

At the premiere in Benin's economic capital, a descendant of Ghezo, a King of Dahomey, who attended the screening at Canal Olympia cinema, shed tears during the viewing.

"For the princess that I am, some of the scenes were very touching. These brave women gave their lives to protect Ghezo's heritage, which is my own," said 37-year-old Sylvine Senami Ghezo.

A younger viewer, 15-year-old Bahunde Efanam, was also emotional and said the film gave her "shivers".

The Amazons of Dahomey have been celebrated many times before, including in the 2018 film Black Panther in which they inspired Wakanda's Dora Milaje warriors.

More recently, Benin's President Patrice Talon unveiled a giant 30-metre high bronze statue representing an Amazon in central Cotonou.

The government said it chose the figure as a symbol of national identity and key part of its history to showcase in a bid to attract tourists.



TOURISM

Made by Chinese artist Li Xiangqun, "the statue will be, for us and those who visit, a symbol of the Beninese woman of yesterday, today and tomorrow", the president said of the display in July.

"What is important is that in Benin, the words courage, bravery, strength, combativeness and honour are not exclusively associated with men," said the president.

For those working in the nation's budding tourism industry like Achille Remy Yelouassi who was at the premiere, the hope is also that films like The Woman King "help put Benin on the map".

Some though said the next film should be made in Benin and not Hollywood since it concerns the country's history.

In the United States, some have criticised the movie for not addressing the role Dahomey Kingdom played in the slave trade. #Boycottwomanking has been trending on Twitter.

But for some Beninese women, the film can also help tackle issues around women's rights according to Senami Totin, a lawyer and activist in the country.

"In a patriarchal society like we have in Benin, you need a lot of courage and determination to defend women's rights," she said, listing challenges from impunity for rape, forced marriages, exclusion of women from inheritance rights, and a lack of representation in politics.

"We no longer have to fight wars against enemy armies but the fight for women's emancipation is a daily one, and for that, we have to have an Amazon spirit," she added.

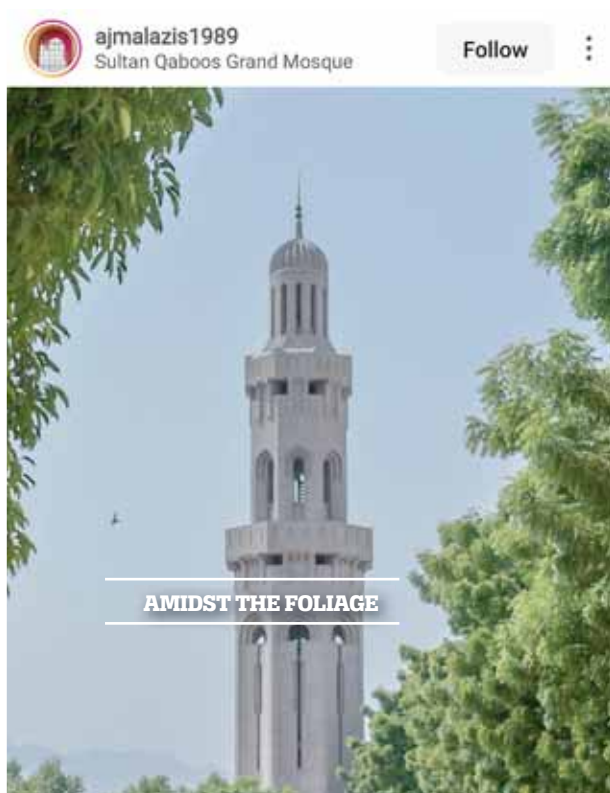
In addition to celebrating the Beninese woman, actress Viola Davis said she hopes the film also inspires young girls around the world.

"It's for my six-year old self... the little girl who was traumatised, the little girl who was called ugly, the little girl who wasn't seen, who was left invisible," she told reporters before the Toronto premiere earlier this month.

"I see you Viola. I see every chocolate girl who is like you. I'm telling you to stop running. This is my gift to you." — **AFP**



INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



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

AROUND THE WORLD

ENTERTAINMENT

Longest running show on Broadway, 'Phantom of the Opera' to close



"**THE PHANTOM OF** the Opera," the longest-running show on Broadway, is set to close on February 18, 2023 due to a sharp drop in ticket sales even after New York theatres reopened following the pandemic lockdown.

"Phantom" is a staple within the Broadway world with over 70 major theatre wins and 13,733 performances since its debut in 1988. Despite its legacy, the New York Post reported that the show was losing \$1 million a month.

Fans mourned the news across social media, reflecting on what the show has meant to thespians and audiences alike. In January, the show cast Emilie Kouatchou as its first Black American actress to portray the lead role of Christine. The decision broke racial barriers and made Broadway history but her performances will be short-lived.

The musical will celebrate its 35th anniversary in January followed by a final Broadway performance on February 18.



Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Phantom of the Opera" is based on the classic novel by Gaston Leroux and was originally directed by Harold Prince. Broadway legends including Michael Crawford, who was the first to play the Phantom, Sarah Brightman, Judy Kaye and others have taken leading roles in the show.

"Phantom" tells the 19th century story of aspiring opera singer Christine Daae who is taught by the mysterious Phantom to hone her vocal skills. However, things take a dark turn when the Phantom chooses Christine as his muse, and she falls in love with an arts benefactor named Raoul. — AFP

CHANGING WORLD

Poet Amanda Gorman, K-pop's Blackpink push global goals at UN



SOUTH KOREAN pop band Blackpink and American poet Amanda Gorman took to the United Nations stage on Monday to urge action on climate change and other global goals that include achieving gender equality and ending hunger and poverty.

Gorman read a new poem in the UN General Assembly chamber in New York, a day before world leaders start making annual speeches to the 193-member body.

"I only ask that you care before it's too late, that you live aware and awake, that you lead with love in hours of hate. I challenge you to heed this call, I dare you to shape our fate. Above all, I dare you to do good, so that the world might be great," said Gorman to a round of applause.

Gorman and Blackpink were taking part in an event to promote the 17 sustainable development goals created by the United Nations in 2015.

Speaking via video, the four members of Blackpink — UN advocates for the sustainable development goals — urged people to decrease energy consumption, choose local produce and cut food waste.

"We must seize this moment and take



actions to create a world that is more sustainable and leave no one behind," Blackpink member Jennie Kim.

A UN climate science panel has said governments and industries should drastically reduce fossil fuel emissions to contain global warming and limit its climate impacts.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said various perils were

pushing the sustainable development goals "further out of reach," describing the challenge of rescuing them as "immense."

"Young people are demanding action — not only for themselves, but for the generations of the future. The perils we face are no match for a world united," Guterres said. "Let's get to work. Let's get our world back on track." — Reuters

DISCOVERY

One person dying of hunger every four seconds: NGOs



ONE PERSON is estimated to be dying of hunger every four seconds, over 200 NGOs warned on Tuesday, urging decisive international action to "end the spiralling global hunger crisis".

In an open letter addressing world leaders gathering in New York for the United Nations General Assembly, 238 organisations from 75 countries, including Oxfam, Save the Children and Plan International expressed outrage at skyrocketing hunger

Pointing out that as many as 19,700 people are estimated to be dying of hunger every day, the NGOs said that this translates to one person dying of hunger every four seconds.

"It is abysmal that with all the technology in agriculture and harvesting techniques today we are still talking about famine in the 21st century," Mohanna Ahmed Ali Eljabaly from the Yemen Family Care Association, one of the let-



levels.

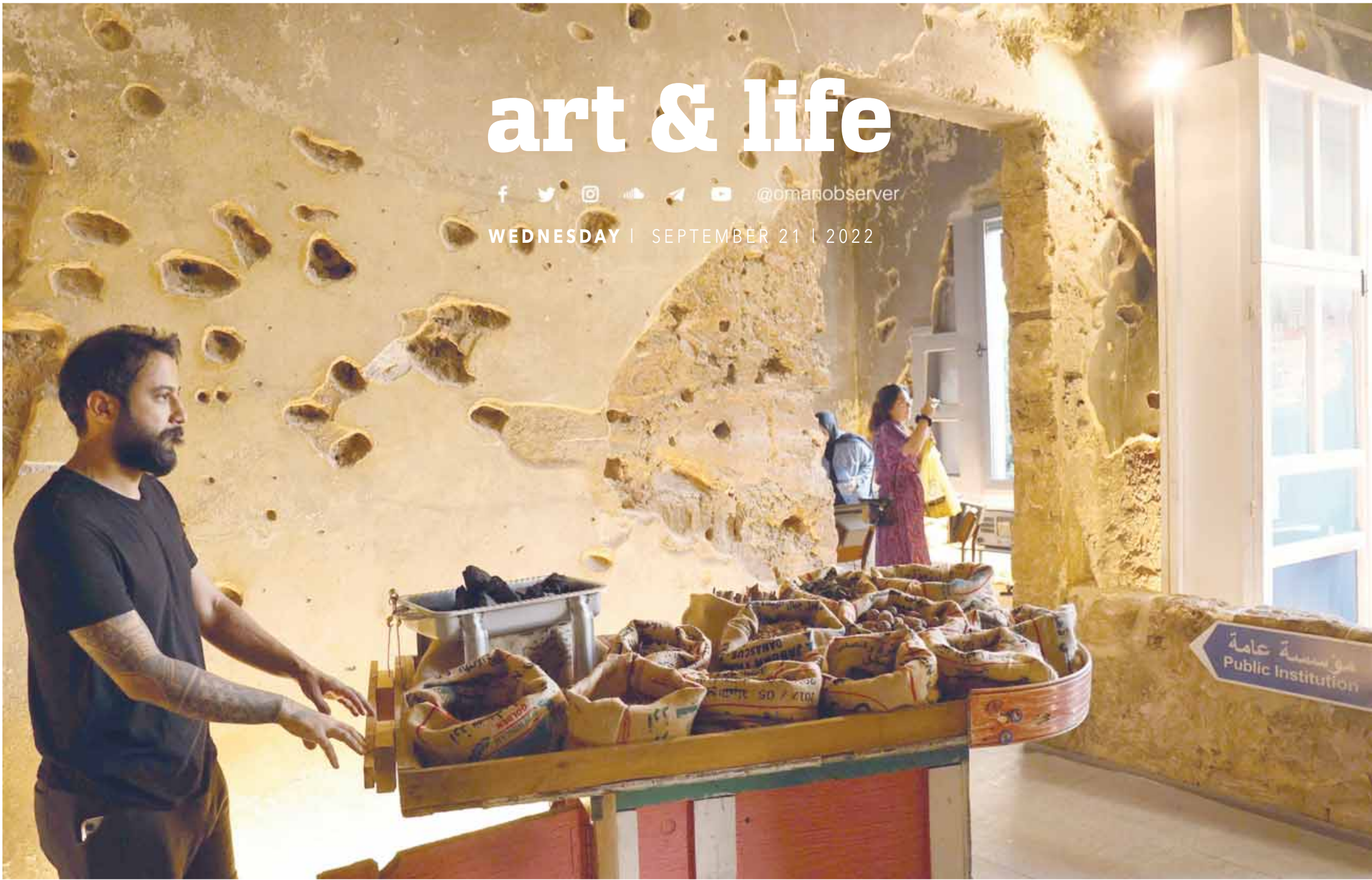
"A staggering 345 million people are now experiencing acute hunger, a number that has more than doubled since 2019," they said in a statement.

"Despite promises from world leaders to never allow famine again in the 21st century, famine is once more imminent in Somalia. Around the world, 50 million people are on the brink of starvation in 45 countries," they said.

ter's signatories, said in the statement.

"This is not about one country or one continent and hunger never only has one cause. This is about the injustice of the whole of humanity," he said.

"We must not wait a moment longer to focus both on providing immediate life-saving food and longer-term support so people can take charge of their futures and provide for themselves and their families." — AFP



Lebanon's past echoes its grim present in exhibition

IN A WAR-SCARRED Beirut heritage house turned museum, archives of Lebanon's troubled past fuse with artistic depictions of its grim present to portray a country seemingly in perpetual turmoil.

Newspaper clippings, film negatives and diary entries from the years before Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war tell a story of government corruption, public sector strikes and student protests. They are shown alongside contemporary pictures, video footage and art installations illustrating today's Lebanon, in the grip of political paralysis and its worst ever economic crisis.

"Allo, Beirut?", which premiered on Thursday and runs until 2023, seeks to map out the decades-old rot at the heart of Lebanon's downward spiral, said the exhibition's director Delphine Abirached Darmency.

"It's strange sometimes to explain what we are experiencing without knowing what happened in the past," she said.

"Beirut is suffering, we are suffering," she added, arguing that much of Lebanon's misery is rooted in the problems of a bygone era.

The exhibit was born in part from the discovery of the archives of late billionaire Jean Prosper Gay-Para, who owned the once-famous Les Caves du Roy nightclub and is widely regarded as a symbol of Lebanon's pre-civil war golden era.

"Those sick minds, obsessed with making money," Gay-Para writes about the country's political elite, in a text on display.

That sentiment is still widely shared by a population battered by the unprecedented economic

crisis that is widely blamed on the country's business and political barons.

Gay-Para "was talking in the 1960s about what we are living today", Darmency said.

CONDITION OF LOSS

More than three decades after the devastating civil war, Lebanon is reeling from a financial crisis that has seen poverty spike as the currency has lost more than 90 per cent of its value on the black market.

Beirut also remains scarred by the huge 2020 port side blast of a pile of ammonium nitrate that killed more than 200 people and compounded a population exodus of a similar scale to that of the civil war period.

In addition to the archive material, the show features installations by young Lebanese artists who were asked to express their feelings about their city.

Rawane Nassif made a short documentary about the Beirut neighbourhood she grew up in, and to which she returned this year after two decades away to take care of her sick parents, both of whom have since died.

"The movie depicts the condition of loss," the 38-year-old anthropologist and film-maker said. "Beirut is in mourning. It is mourning the death of its people and the death of all the chances it once had."

Visual artist Raoul Mallat, 28, also explored the theme of grief, in a short film combining archive family footage from his childhood with recent shots of Beirut.

"This project helped me a lot in grieving some aspects of my city that I will not find again," he said.

BUILT ON RUBBLE

The venue for the exhibit is itself a testament to Lebanon's complicated past. The three-storey Beit Beirut, known as the Yellow House, was built in the 1920s by renowned architect Youssef Bey Aftimos.

Riddled with bullet holes and other civil war damage, it stands alongside what used to be known as the "Green Line" that separated Beirut's Muslim and Christian districts during the conflict.

It was renovated and turned into a museum and cultural space that temporarily opened in 2017. It closed again due to difficulties, but the new exhibit has once more opened it to the public. Holes in the walls once used by wartime gunmen have been fitted with screens showing footage of the unprecedented protest movement of 2019 that demanded sweeping political change before it ran out of steam.

One of the rooms is decorated with worn-out furniture and destroyed objects collected from the now-abandoned Les Caves du Roy nightclub in an attempt to recreate the space from Beirut's heyday. The installation by Lebanese artists Rola Abu Darwish and Rana Abbout aims to make a symbolic statement about rubble and Lebanon's tumultuous existence.

"Beirut is built on rubble," said Abu Darwish, 38. "One of the main elements of Beirut to me is rubble."

"It's part of where we live, how we live, and who we are. And I feel that in the direction we're going, we are going to be making more rubble." — AFP

