

Times

OF OMAN

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51

YEARS OF
LEGACY

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REAL ESTATE REGISTER LAW

HM issues Royal decree

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik yesterday issued Royal decree No. (56/2026) on promulgating the Real Estate Register Law, after presenting the same before the Council of Oman. It reads as follows:

Article (1) stipulates that the provisions of the Real Estate Register Law attached to this decree shall be enforced.

Article (2) states that the Minister of Housing and Urban Planning shall issue the Executive Regulation of the law attached to this decree, as well as the decisions necessary for the implementation of its provisions. Till such a time, the existing regulations and decisions shall continue to be enforced without prejudice to the provisions of this law.

Article (3) cancels the Real Estate Register System promulgated by Royal decree No. (2/98), as well as all that contradicts the attached law or contravenes its provisions.

Article (4) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from the day following its date of publishing. — **OMA**

COMMENTARY

Who is the lunatic regime!



MOHAMED ISSA AL ZADJALI
Chairman,
Muscat Media Group

As 2026 sees the world teetering on the edge of a broader conflict, the rhetoric coming from the White House has reached a fever pitch. President Trump's recent demands for "unconditional surrender" from Tehran, paired with the chilling warning that a "whole civilization could die tonight," have reignited a global debate: Is the United States a guardian of peace, or is its own volatility the greatest threat to global safety?

Central to the Trump administration's justification for military action and naval blockades is the claim that Iran is on the verge of using a nuclear weapon. Yet, the historical and religious record tells a different story. For years, Iran's spiritual leadership maintained a fatwa against nuclear arms, and international inspectors confirmed that the JCPOA ef-

fectively blocked all pathways to a weapon—until the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the deal.

By insisting that Iran is a "lunatic" state that would "use a bomb immediately," the U.S. media often bypasses the fact that Iran does not currently possess such an arsenal. This rhetoric creates a "preventative war" logic that many see as a pretext for regime change rather than a genuine effort at non-proliferation.

The Double Standard of Sovereignty

One cannot discuss the Iranian nuclear issue without addressing the "elephant in the room": Israel. As the only nation in the region with an unacknowledged nuclear arsenal, Israel remains exempt from the "maximum pressure" applied to its neighbours.

This double standard traces back to the 1960s. President John F. Kennedy was famously the last U.S. leader to firmly challenge Israel's nuclear ambitions at the Dimona reactor. Since his assassination, U.S. policy has shifted toward a selective enforcement of nuclear "rights"—where allies are permitted a deterrent while adversaries are threatened with "fire and fury" for even seeking the same security.

The current "Trump rhetoric" has replaced traditional statecraft with a "Madman Theory" of diplomacy. By labelling foreign leaders as "crazy" and "stupid," the administration attempts to dehumanize the opposition, making the threat of nuclear force seem like a logical necessity.

Trump's recent ultimatum—that Iran must "obey or be destroyed"—frames global security as a zero-sum game. To much of the world, the "lunacy" is not found in Tehran, but in a superpower that tears up treaties, ignores international law, and claims to protect the world while threatening to "finish the job" through total destruction.

Are We Safer Without a Global Policeman?

The history of the last century is a ledger of U.S.-led regime changes and "preventative" wars that have frequently left behind power vacuums and humanitarian crises. When a nation claims the exclusive right to own nuclear weapons while threatening to erase others from the map, it forces a difficult question upon the international community: Is the world truly safer under a "Pax Americana," or is American hegemony the very engine of global instability?

If the goal is truly a world without nuclear conflict, the path cannot be paved with insults and "unconditional surrender." It must begin with a consistent standard of sovereignty—one where "safety" isn't a privilege granted only to those who obey.

MUSCAT AIRPORT FREE ZONE OPENS NEW GATEWAY FOR GLOBAL INVESTORS



The project aims to establish a modern business complex featuring smart offices and integrated workspaces

MUSCAT: Asyad Group has announced the operational readiness of Muscat Airport Free Zone, aimed at attracting global companies and promising economic projects. The zone will open opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with the private sector, while integrating the logistics solutions offered by Asyad Group to efficiently connect the Sultanate of Oman with global and international markets.

Asyad has signed its first usufruct agreement with Nama Real Estate Company to develop, manage, and operate a business complex spanning 25,000 square metres within the free zone. This marks the actual launch of investments and projects in the zone, operating within a business environment directly linked to the integrated global logistics services provided by the Group. These services include free zones, economic cities, ports, and maritime and land transport networks, offering investors operational integration that enhances supply chain efficiency and connects various logistics services into a single ecosystem.

The project aims to establish a modern business complex featuring smart offices and integrated workspaces, supporting the needs of regional and international companies while enhancing the free zone's readiness to attract corporate headquarters and investment services from global firms.

This agreement follows the completion of the first phase of development at Muscat Airport Free Zone, which spans an area of 400,000 square metres. Works included the implementation of key infrastructure such as internal road networks, water, electricity, and telecommunications facilities, in addition to the construction of a services building to streamline procedures and services for investors.

The first phase is also characterised by high traffic fluidity for entry and exit to and from the free zone, its direct connection to major road networks and strategic location adjacent to Muscat International Airport. This enhances operational movement efficiency and enables rapid connectivity to regional and global markets. **>A5**



Oman begin GCC Games campaign with two bronze medals

A4

BILATERAL RELATIONS

Oman and Canada sign memorandum of understanding on political consultations

MUSCAT: Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister received in Muscat on Wednesday Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada. This marks the first official visit of a Canadian foreign minister to the Sultanate of Oman in over a decade.

The visit reflects the positive trajectory of bilateral relations over the past fifty years and reaffirms the shared commitment to promoting peace and stability in the region.

The two ministers agreed to elevate the level of their bilateral partnership and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on political consultations, aimed at establishing regular bilateral dialogue.

Specifically, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in the fields of trade, energy, critical minerals, higher education, and tourism, in addition to strengthening people-to-people ties.

They noted that bilateral trade volume reached CAD222 million in 2025, while acknowledging significant potential for further economic growth.

The two ministers exchanged views on the conflict in the region, stressing the importance of protecting civilian lives, supporting de-escalation efforts, and ensuring freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

Minister Anand also expressed her appreciation for Oman's long-standing role in regional diplomacy over the past years.

The two ministers reaffirmed their shared commitment to international law, including respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states.

Minister Anand extended her sincere gratitude for the warm welcome and generous hospitality extended by the Government of the Sultanate of Oman, reaffirming Canada's commitment to building a substantive and forward-looking partnership with Oman. — **OMA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN
CBSE Class 12 results

1 The declaration of the 2026 Class 12 CBSE results has triggered disappointment among students in Oman. **>A3**

OMAN
Oman, Canada trade

2 Oman's Minister of Economy received Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada yesterday. **>A5**

WORLD
Airstrike kills 100

3 At least 100 civilians have been killed in a Nigerian airstrike on a crowded market in the country. **>A7**

Legacy is Capacity

As Oman experiences rapid transformation, many developments race to meet global benchmarks. How do you decide what meaningful progress looks like without compromising cultural identity? Meaningful progress, in my view, is not measured by how quickly we build, but by how wisely we design. In real estate development and tourism, I believe every project must reflect Oman's geography, heritage, and social rhythm. A destination should feel Omani before it feels international.

As we work on smart urban developments, integrated tourism destinations, and AI-driven economic initiatives — including our AI Zone platform — the focus is not imitation of global models, but thoughtful adaptation. Oman's strengths lie in its stability, strategic location, human capital, and cultural depth. These are competitive advantages.

True progress integrates technology with tradition. A tourism development should empower local communities. A technology zone should build Omani capabilities, not merely attract capital. Global benchmarks are useful references, but identity is the anchor that ensures sustainability. Development disconnected from culture may grow quickly — but development rooted in identity endures.

Women in Oman are increasingly shaping both policy and enterprise. Having operated at the intersection of public service and private investment, how do you approach leadership differently in each space, and what lessons should the next generation carry forward? Public service taught me institutional responsibility and long-term alignment with national frameworks. Private investment — particularly in real estate, tourism, and technology — demands agility, financial discipline, and decisive execution. Working between both spaces revealed that transformation happens when policy vision translates into viable projects. Vision 2040 sets the national direction; our role in the private sector is to convert that direction into sustainable tourism assets, intelligent urban communities, and AI-enabled economic platforms that create meaningful employment.



As a woman leader, I believe participation must evolve into influence. Representation alone is not enough; we must

TOP WOMEN LEADERS IN OMAN

strengthen governance, financial literacy, and technical expertise among women so that leadership becomes institutional, not symbolic.

To the next generation, especially young women: build competence. Understand economics, governance, land development, and digital transformation. Confidence gains authority when supported by knowledge — and knowledge creates lasting impact.



Dr. Siham Al Harthy Founder and Chairwoman of Siham Real Estate Development & Investment, Board Member Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry Siham Al Harthy operates at the intersection of policy, investment, and nation-building. From public service to private development, she has helped shape tourism, real estate, and emerging digital ecosystems with a values-first lens. Her work insists that true progress integrates technology with culture, and that lasting development builds capacity, not just visibility.

Wearing many hats often means constant interruption. What practices or perspectives help you remain centred and intentional in how you lead?

Clarity of mission is essential when leading across multiple sectors. Not every opportunity aligns with long-term value creation. I evaluate decisions based on whether they contribute to ecosystem building rather than isolated outcomes.

For example, a tourism project is not simply hospitality — it connects to infrastructure, SMEs, employment, and cultural preservation. Likewise, the AI Zone initiative is not just about technology; it is about positioning Oman within the future digital economy and developing national capability. I dedicate time to strategic

thinking beyond daily operations. Leadership requires reflection as much as action. I also believe strongly in empowering capable teams; institutions must function independently of individuals.

Remaining centered comes from understanding that this phase of work is part of a broader national transformation. When purpose is larger than personal ambition, focus becomes clearer and distractions less significant.

When future generations look back at this phase of Oman's transformation, what do you hope they will say you helped make possible?

I hope they will say that we helped shift Oman toward a value-based, knowledge-driven economy.

Through real estate development, I hope we contributed to building smarter and more sustainable urban environments. Through tourism, I hope we strengthened Oman's global positioning while preserving authenticity. Through AI and digital ecosystem initiatives, I hope we laid foundational platforms for long-term competitiveness.

Most importantly, I hope it is remembered that women were active architects of this transformation — not observers. If future generations inherit stronger institutions, globally competitive sectors, and leadership spaces where women participate naturally and confidently, then our efforts will have mattered.

Legacy, for me, is not visibility. It is capacity — building structures that allow others to grow further.

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION



Documentary titled 'Dr. Thoms' to be launched

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Information is preparing to release a documentary titled Al Dakhtar Thoms "Dr. Thoms." The documentary chronicles the life of American physician Dr. Wells Thoms, one of the most prominent figures associated with the history of healthcare services in the Sultanate of Oman. The film blends historical narration, reenacted dramatic scenes, rare archival footage, and live-action footage in Oman and the United States, all within a contemporary cinematic approach. The work traces the early journey of Dr. Wells Thoms—locally known in Oman as "Al Dakhtar Thoms"—from his childhood and early exposure to the suffering of leprosy and infectious disease patients in Oman, to his eventual dedication of his life to medical and humanitarian work in the Sultanate of Oman. The film also covers key milestones in his life, including the development of Al Rahma Hospital, the launch of specialized

initiatives to treat infectious diseases and leprosy, his medical journeys across various regions, and his close relationship with Omani society. The documentary draws on testimonies and interviews with researchers, academics, and figures associated with medical services in Oman, in addition to private interviews with family members of the doctor and academics in the United States. Filming locations included the states of Florida, Kansas, and Michigan, where aspects of his academic and family life were documented. Cinematic colour grading and sound mixing were carried out in specialised studios in London. The documentary "Al Dakhtar Thoms" aims to highlight a figure who left a significant mark on Omani memory, through a work that blends history, drama, and humanitarian dimensions, while documenting an important chapter in the development of the health sector in the Sultanate of Oman. — ONA

Several pacts signed to support sustainable development in Dhofar

These projects aim to achieve sustainable value for society and support the development process in the governorate

SALALAH: OQ Base Industries signed several agreements and memoranda of cooperation in Dhofar Governorate on Wednesday, as part of its commitment to supporting developmental and community initiatives. The signing ceremony was held in the presence of HH Sayyid Marwan Turki Al Said, Governor of Dhofar. The agreements included a contract between the company and the Office of the Wali of Salalah to support the Resilience Hub, aimed at enhancing its role as a community and developmental hub serving various segments of society in the governorate. The agreement was signed by Sheikh Dr. Said Humaid Al Harthy, Wali of Salalah. This initiative reflects the company's commitment to contributing effectively to sustainable development goals and supporting national initiatives aligned with Oman Vision 2040. The Resilience Hub in Salalah works to strengthen the resilience of infrastructure and urban systems against changes and risks, directly supporting the "Sustainable Cities" pillar of the national vision. The agreements also covered the development project for "Ain Rob" in the Wilayat of Rakhyut, which aims to enhance the site's tourism and natural potential and improve the visitor experience. The project includes the construction of a 1.7-kilometre pedestrian path using natural stone, alongside four strategically distributed bridges to improve accessibility and safety while preserving the environmental and natural character of the site. Ghosn Zaher Al Abri, Wali of Rakhyut, emphasised that the project aims to improve visitor access to "Ain Rob" and enhance safety during visits while maintaining the natural essence of the site and the surrounding area, noting that the project supports community, environmental, and tourism development in the Wilayat of Rakhyut. Furthermore, the company signed an agreement to fund the purchase of medical devices and equipment for the Cardiology and Cardiac Surgery Center at Sultan Qaboos Hospital in Salalah. In this regard, Dr. Hani Ahmed Al Qadhi, Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services in Dhofar Governorate, explained that the agreement comes within the framework of strengthening community partnership and supporting the health sector. He noted that it contributes to developing specialised medical services and raising the efficiency of healthcare provided to patients, particularly in the field of cardiology and cardiac surgery, while keeping pace with community needs. The signed agreements also included a contribution to establishing an integrated cultural centre in the Wilayat of Mirbat. The centre is intended to support cultural activity and host literary and artistic events as well as social occasions, thereby strengthening the cultural identity of the governorate and providing an integrated facility for the community. Hamdan Hamad Al Junaibi, Wali of Mirbat, stressed that the establishment of the centre represents a qualitative addition to the cultural and social infrastructure of the wilayat. He noted it will provide a stimulating space for developing young talent and enhancing community cohesion, supporting efforts to develop the cultural landscape and promote sustainable social development. Hilal Abdullah Al Maamari, Director General of the Directorate General of Culture, Sports and Youth in Dhofar Governorate, pointed out that this partnership represents a model of integration between national institutions, contributing to the expansion of cultural and knowledge programmes and enhancing the presence of creativity. Eng. Khalid Khalfan Al Asmi, CEO of OQ Base Industries, confirmed that supporting developmental, cultural, health, and social projects is part of the company's ongoing commitment to corporate social responsibility. He noted the company's keenness to contribute to initiatives that promote comprehensive development and serve the community across various sectors. In a speech delivered during the event, he added that the company continues to strengthen community partnerships and contribute effectively to supporting developmental initiatives in vital sectors. He added that this drive aims to achieve sustainable value for society and support the development process in the governorate, in harmony with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 toward building a prosperous and cohesive knowledge-based society.



2026 CBSE Class 12 results spark disappointment among students

Several students expressed shock after finding that their final marks closely mirrored their internal pre-board examination scores



Times News Service

MUSCAT: The declaration of the 2026 Class 12 results by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Wednesday triggered disappointment among students and parents in Oman, with many claiming their scores were far below expectations. Several students expressed shock after finding that their final

marks closely mirrored their internal pre-board examination scores. “I got almost the same marks as my pre-board exams. This is unfair because board exam marks are usually much higher,” a Class 12 student said. Indian schools conduct three major internal assessments for Grade 12 students — quarterly, half-yearly and pre-board examinations. According to teachers, the board was expected to consider the best performance from these assessments after the cancellation of examinations in the Gulf region. “The CBSE was supposed to take the best scores from these exams, but in some cases that clearly did not happen. It has come as a shock to both parents and students,” a teacher said. In mid-March, the CBSE cancelled Class 12 board examinations in several Middle East countries, including Oman, Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, citing regional tensions and security concerns. The board later adopted an alternative assessment method. More than 2,200 students from Oman had registered for the Class 12 examinations this year. School authorities also pointed

to a sharp decline in the number of students securing perfect scores in subjects. “Students could not score 100 out of 100 because the marks were based on internal assessments,” a school official said. Teachers admitted that even some leading schools in Muscat witnessed failures this year — an uncommon trend compared with previous years. “We never had students failing in our school earlier, but this year the results were different,” a teacher from a Muscat-based school said. Students said the cancellation of examinations had significantly affected their overall performance. “The war situation affected our marks badly. If the exams had been conducted, we could have scored at least 10 to 15 per cent more because we were much better prepared for the final exams than for the school tests,” a student said. The overall pass percentage also recorded a decline this year. The CBSE reported an overall pass percentage of 85.20 per cent, down 3.9 percentage points from last year. According to board data,

1,857,517 students registered for the Class 12 examinations in 2026. Girls once again outperformed boys, recording a pass percentage of 88.86 per cent compared with 82.13 per cent for boys. Transgender students achieved a 100 per cent pass rate. While the board does not publish a traditional merit list, 5.32 per cent of students — 94,028 candidates — scored 90 per cent and above, while 0.97 per cent, or 17,113 students, secured 95 per cent and above. In India, the Trivandrum region emerged as the best-performing zone with a pass percentage of 95.62 per cent, followed by Chennai at 93.84 per cent and Bengaluru at 93.19 per cent. The board also highlighted its transition to full-scale On-Screen Marking (OSM), under which 9,866,622 answer books were digitally evaluated to reduce errors in totalling and posting marks. For students seeking improvement or placed in the compartment category, supplementary examinations will be held on July 15, 2026, with the application process beginning on June 2.

PILGRIMAGE



Oman Hajj Mission for 1447 AH departs for Holy Lands

MUSCAT: Oman Hajj Mission for 1447 AH departed the country on Wednesday for the Holy Lands. The mission is headed by Ahmed Saleh Al Rashidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs. The mission members were seen off at Muscat International Airport by Dr. Mohammed Said Al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, Ibrahim Saad Bishan, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the Sultanate of Oman,

and a number of officials from the Ministry. Upon its arrival at King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah, the mission is scheduled to proceed to Makkah, while a team from the mission will later head to Madinah. During its presence in Makkah and Madinah, Oman Hajj Mission will provide services to Omani pilgrims in the Holy Lands and oversee the performance of their rituals with ease and convenience. The mission comprises several delegations, including the Fatwa and Religious Guidance delegation, the Administrative and Financial delegation, the Hajj Companies Supervision delegation, the Medical delegation, the State Audit Institution delegation, the Royal Oman Police delegation, and the Media delegation. Notably, the number of pilgrims from the Sultanate of Oman this year has reached 14,000, including 13,560 Omani citizens and 440 residents. — ONA

AT AL MURTAFA'A CAMP



Royal Army of Oman 2026 band competition concludes

MUSCAT: The Royal Army of Oman (RAO) concluded its band competition for the year 2026 on Wednesday. The concluding ceremony was held under the auspices of Maj. Gen Mattar Salim Al Balushi, Commander of the Royal Army of Oman. The ceremony took place at the headquarters of the RAO Music at Al Murtafa'a Camp. At the beginning of the ceremony, the Commander of the Royal Army of Oman, the chief guest, inaugurated the identity of the RAO Music, which affirms support and the boosting of morale in the fields of pride and honour. Subsequently, the chief guest listened to a briefing on the competition and its envisioned

objectives. The musical bands participating in the competition then presented various musical performances that showcased high levels of competition in performance and skill, reflecting the high efficiency and capabilities of the personnel of the RAO Music. At the conclusion of the event, the Commander of the Royal Army of Oman honored the top achievers in the competition. The organisation of the band competition is intended to maintain the technical standards of the musical bands of the Royal Army of Oman and to provide them with distinguished personnel to participate in regional and international musical competitions. — ONA

MINISTRY OF HERITAGE AND TOURISM

New archaeological site discovered in Al Khabourah

AL KHABOURAH: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has announced the survey and registration of a new archaeological site in the “Hajar Al Sananat” area in the Wilayat of Al Khabourah, North Al Batinah Governorate. The new site contains a collection of rare rock inscriptions and drawings dating back to ancient historical periods, adding to the rich archaeological and cultural legacy of the Sultanate of Oman.

Rock bearing inscriptions The site features a main rock bearing inscriptions and drawings executed using the rock-pecking technique. These drawings include zoomorphic shapes, anthropomorphic symbols, and geometric patterns, reflecting aspects of symbolic expression by ancient Omani societies and their relationship with the surrounding natural environment across different historical eras.

This discovery in “Hajar Al Sananat” area of the the Wilayar of Al Khabourah is part of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism’s ongoing efforts to document and preserve archaeological sites. The inscriptions serve as an important visual record documenting features of early human life and prevailing environmental patterns during those historical periods. — ONA

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Oman begin GCC Games campaign with two bronze medals in Qatar



Both the medals came in taekwondo as Nebras and Omaima finished third in their respective bouts in Doha on Tuesday

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Oman made a promising start to their campaign at the fourth GCC Games in Doha, Qatar, on Tuesday with the na-



tional taekwondo team delivering the Sultanate's first medals of the competition while the women's 3x3 basketball side bowed out after a spirited fight. Oman secured two bronze

medals on the opening day of action through taekwondo athletes Nebras Al Touqi and Omaima Al Hinai as the multi-sport event continues until May 22 in the Qatari capital.

Nebras produced an impressive performance in the men's 58kg category to clinch bronze, while Omaima added the second medal in the women's 49kg division.

However, team-mate Omar Al Sinani exited the competition after losing his men's 80kg bout to Kuwait's Abdullah Batil.

In women's 3x3 basketball, Oman's campaign ended in the preliminary round following back-to-back defeats.

The team went down 15-10 to hosts Qatar despite a bright display from Shams Al Khonji, Fatima Al Numani, Rabi Al Kalbani and Reem Al Shirawi.

Oman then produced a much stronger showing against Kuwait,

forcing the match into overtime after an 11-11 deadlock in regulation time, before narrowly losing 13-12.

In table tennis, Oman suffered a 3-0 defeat to Saudi Arabia in the team event on the opening day.

The swimming competition saw several Omani athletes in action, with Hamad Al Hasani finishing fifth in the men's 800m freestyle race.

Meshal Al Kulaibi was placed seventh in the 50m freestyle in 24.84 econds, while Mohammed Al Wahaibi clocked 25.11 seconds to finish ninth.

Al Wahaibi also took ninth place in the 100m backstroke with a time of 1:09.89.

In bowling, Hassan Al Kharusi finished 23rd in the singles standings with 1,024 points from six games, while Juma Al Habsi ended 26th with 993 points in a field featuring 26 competitors from across the GCC nations.

Ambassador welcomes Omani delegation

Ammar bin Abdullah Al Busaidi, Oman's Ambassador to Qatar, received the Omani delegation participating in the Gulf Games in the presence of Abdullah Bamkhalif, Secretary-General of the Oman Olympic Committee, and senior delegation officials.

The ambassador wished the athletes success and expressed that the teams would produce performances reflecting the progress of Omani sport on the Gulf stage.

Saudi Arabia topped the medal standings after the opening day with four gold, three silver and one bronze medals.

Hosts Qatar were second with three gold, four silver and three bronze medals, while Bahrain occupied third place with two gold, three silver and one bronze.

LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

From a simple incubator to a national icon: Omani youth leads poultry self-sufficiency in Ibri

IBRI: An ambitious young Omani man continues his journey in the livestock production sector, investing his passion and ability to turn available potential into pioneering projects. With unwavering determination and a forward-looking vision, he is contributing to the national economy and food security, working towards self-sufficiency and meeting local market needs.

Badr bin Saleem Al Kalbani's "Murtafaat Al Najeed" "Al Najeed Heights" project has emerged as the first chick-producing hatchery in the Wilayat of Ibri, A'Dhahirah Governorate. What began as a private investment has become a national symbol of collaboration between youth initiatives and government plans to localise the poultry sector and improve supply chains in Oman.

Al Kalbani said the idea grew from a clear passion for livestock production and a desire to invest available environmental resources for sustainable income. The goal was never a passing experiment, he explained, but a vision to build an integrated project serving the community.

The first step came in 2003, when he owned a small farm in Ibri and looked for an additional source of income. After studying agriculture and livestock, he settled on hatching — a rare project at the time. He started with a simple incubator capable of holding just 350 eggs, limited to local chickens. Over the years, he expanded gradually, and in 2009 he established a small hatchery that marked his real entry into the commercial market.

In 2024, Al Kalbani opened a new hatchery with a larger capacity, equipped with high-quality incubators, strengthening his position as the first chick producer in A'Dhahirah Governorate and continuing his mission to support food security and meet local demand.

The model hatchery includes specialised chambers, Al Kalbani



explained. Eggs arrive in a cooling room, then move to a sorting chamber where they are placed in special trays. The trays go to an incubation chamber for 18 days. After that, the eggs are transferred to a hatching chamber with modern machines, where hatching takes three days. Finally, the chicks are gathered in a collection chamber and placed in boxes for delivery to customers and farms.

The hatchery's current capacity is about 700,000 chicks a year, while actual production so far has reached about 450,000 chicks annually, he said.

Most of the production is marketed locally across Oman, including the governorates of A'Dhahirah, A'Dakhiliyah, Al Batinah and A'Sharqiyah, reflecting the project's vital role in supporting local markets and strengthening the food security system, Badr Al Kalbani said.

The experience, despite its challenges, was an important milestone for honing expertise and enhancing capabilities, and the success achieved today is the fruit of perseverance and continuous learning, he added.

The goal is an integrated broiler production cycle — from egg to chick to rearing to slaughter through modern abattoirs — achieving full integration in the production chain and strengthening food security, he said.

Al Kalbani praised the vital role of the Directorate General of Agriculture and Water Resources in A'Dhahirah Governorate and the Municipality of Ibri in supporting animal welfare, saying their help has directly raised production efficiency.

Intensive awareness seminars and vaccination programmes have boosted knowledge among breeders, along with the selection of strains with high growth rates and natural adaptability to the local environment, giving the product exceptional quality in the market.

Work follows strict sterilisation and biosecurity systems at all hatching stages, ensuring chicks are disease-free and allowing breeders to receive "fresh chicks" at peak vitality and activity. Strict health standards have also reduced mortality and increased poultry production efficiency, strengthening local consumer

confidence and confirming the project as an important contributor to national food security.

Eng. Mohammed bin Ali Al Shandoudi, Director of the Animal Wealth Department at the same directorate, told Oman News Agency (ONA) that the project is a strategic addition to the national drive for food security. Oman has made significant progress in the sector, with self-sufficiency for white meat reaching about 62 percent. Local hatching projects such as "Murtafaat Al Najeed" are a fundamental pillar for raising that rate and narrowing the import gap, ensuring market stability and the availability of high-quality local products.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, through its relevant directorate, places the support of entrepreneurs in the poultry sector at the top of its priorities, he explained. A package of facilitations is provided, including specialised technical guidance and regular follow-up of production stages, to ensure hatcheries comply with standard specifications and veterinary health standards. -ONA

PRESS CONFERENCE

New updates to Education Quality Assurance System

MUSCAT: Oman Authority for Quality Assurance of Education held a media briefing yesterday, highlighting its national competencies and strategic projects, while reviewing the latest developments in the education quality assurance system in the Sultanate of Oman, in line with the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

Dr. Jokha Abdullah Al Shukaili, CEO of the Authority, delivered a visual presentation during which she reviewed the Authority's journey and its primary national roles in regulating and ensuring the quality of education across various levels and types.

She emphasized that the Authority continues to fulfill its national mandate in leading the quality assurance system in the Sultanate of Oman by establishing national quality assurance standards, evaluating school performance, ensuring the quality of higher education institutions and programs, and overseeing the National Qualifications Framework. This is in addition to developing the system for national measurement, testing, international studies, and professional licensing for educational personnel.

Al Shukaili explained that the

Authority has undergone significant transformations in recent years, including the launch of the national system for school performance evaluation. To date, the performance evaluation of 100 government and private schools has been completed, with 58 reports published on its website. Furthermore, academic accreditation systems have been developed, and institutional and program accreditation processes have been executed. Institutional accreditation results currently stand at 22 accredited higher education institutions, three institutions with conditional accreditation, and two institutions under probation, alongside the accreditation of several academic programs.

During the briefing, she pointed out the Authority's efforts regarding the National Qualifications Framework, which included the inclusion and alignment of 21 academic and professional qualifications. A national database has been established comprising a range of academic, professional, technical, and vocational qualifications, which enhances the reliability of national qualifications and their alignment with international standards.



BILATERAL COOPERATION



Al Nu'mani receives Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs

MUSCAT: Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'mani, Minister of the Royal Office, on Wednesday received Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada. During the meeting, Gen. Sultan and the Canadian Minister discussed the progress being made in developing relations

between the Sultanate of Oman and Canada. The Canadian Minister commended the high level of coordination between Oman and Canada, hoping that bilateral cooperation would continue to be developed in a manner that achieves the common interests of the two countries. — **ONA**

MUSCAT AIRPORT FREE ZONE

< FROM A1 New logistic hub

Faisal Ali Al Balushi, Senior Executive Director of Muscat Airport Free Zone at Asyad Group, explained that partnership with the private sector represents a cornerstone in building a world-class logistics and investment ecosystem originating from the Sultanate of Oman. He noted that this project with Nama Real Estate Company embodies this vision and supports the zone's ongoing efforts to achieve the objectives of the Oman Investment Authority and the economic diversification goals of Oman Vision 2040. This project is part of Muscat Airport Free Zone's efforts to strengthen its position as an integrated regional hub for business and logistics services. This is achieved by providing a modern investment environment with competitive incentives, including 100 percent foreign ownership, customs and tax exemptions, and

a one-stop-shop system to facilitate procedures. The zone continues to develop an integrated business ecosystem targeting sectors such as e-commerce, logistics, pharmaceutical industries, precious metals, and aviation-related services. It capitalises on its strategic location near Muscat International Airport and its ability to efficiently connect investors with regional and global markets. Investors will benefit from a package of exceptional incentives, including 100% foreign ownership, exemption from customs duties on imports and exports, tax exemptions, as well as a one-stop-shop system for completing procedures and obtaining licenses. These advantages enhance the zone's readiness to attract high-value investments and provide an integrated business environment that supports the growth and expansion of companies. — **ONA**

MEETING

Oman, Canada explore opportunities for bilateral cooperation in key sectors

MUSCAT: Dr. Khamis Saif Al Jabri, Minister of Economy, received yesterday Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, and her accompanying delegation. The meeting, held at the Ministry's headquarters, aimed to strengthen the growing economic relations between the Sultanate of Oman and Canada and to explore opportunities for bilateral cooperation in trade and investment sectors. The meeting commenced with a welcoming address in which the Ministry affirmed the depth of relations between the two countries and stressed the importance of building on past joint cooperation to expand the horizons of economic partnership. The meeting also featured a visual presentation highlighting the key features of the Omani economy and the developments it is undergoing amid changing economic



conditions, alongside a review of Omani-Canadian economic relations and promising sectors for joint cooperation. Discussions during the meeting also covered the priorities of Oman Vision 2040, particularly within non-oil sectors such as manufacturing industries, logistics, tech-

nology, and clean energy. In addition, both sides explored ways to expand investment partnerships and improve market access. The two sides affirmed the importance of cooperation in promising sectors, including clean energy, mining value chains, logistics services, and advanced manufac-

turing, all of which align with economic diversification targets. The meeting was attended by Dr. Nasser Rashid Al Maawali, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Economy and Sayyid Dr. Munthir Hilal Al Busaidi, Head of Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit. — **ONA**

FORUM

Oman CX Forum 2026 to shape the future of customer experience

MUSCAT: Customer experience and service excellence will take centre stage as the Oman CX Forum 2026 brings together industry leaders, experts and decision-makers at Kempinski Hotel Muscat on 10 June. Organised by Times of Oman and Muscat Media Group in collaboration with Gulf Leaders Circle and presented by Infoline, the forum will gather over 250 senior professionals from across sectors to discuss how organisations can better respond to changing customer expectations in a fast-evolving, competitive landscape. This year's discussions will be grounded in practical experience, with CX leaders and industry practitioners sharing real examples and insights. Key themes will include customer loyalty, service



innovation, personalisation, the impact of AI and technology on customer interactions, and how organisations can deliver more consistent experiences across every sector.

The forum will also focus on the internal side of CX—building a stronger customer-first mindset, enabling frontline teams, and creating deeper emotional connections with customers. The con-

versations will span key sectors including banking, telecom, retail, healthcare, hospitality, FMCG, education, utilities and real estate, where customer experience is now a key differentiator. The forum will also feature the Oman CX Awards 2026, recognising leading brands across 40+ product and service categories based on nationwide consumer voting, along with recognition for selected CX professionals. The Oman CX Forum 2026 is expected to once again bring together the people shaping how customer experience is designed, delivered and improved across Oman. For more information, contact: Sanjeev Rana at sanjeev@mmg.om / +968 97221630 or Syed Amir Saleem at syed.amir@mmg.om / +968 78471944.



Muscat Gases Company SAOG
PO Box 11, PC 124, Rusayl, Sultanate of Oman.
Tel: 22526900, Email: info@muscatgas.com

COMPANY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31ST MARCH 2026

Dear Shareholders,

We would like to present to you the unaudited consolidated financial statements for the period ended 31st March 2026. At the group level, the total turnover of the Company for the period ended 31st March 2026 is 5.125 million **﷮** compared with 6.518 million **﷮** for the same period of the last year, i.e. a decrease of 21%.

The parent Company's total turnover for the period ended 31st March 2026 is 4.675 million **﷮** compared with 6.169 million **﷮** for the same period of last year, i.e. a decrease of 24%. At the group level, net profit after tax for the period ended 31st March 2026 is **﷮** 84,078 compared with net profit of 16,557 **﷮** for the same period of the last year.

The parent Company's net profit after tax for the period ended 31st March 2026 is 102,967 **﷮** compared with net profit of 12,764 **﷮** for the same period of the last year.

The Management is focusing on the enhancement of LPG business to yield better results in the coming period and the Company will put all its efforts to maximise the shareholders return.

Thanking you,

Mr. Abdullah Saud M. Al Romaih
Chairman

SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

	31 March 2026		31 March 2025	
	Parent ﷮	Group ﷮	Parent ﷮	Group ﷮
Revenue	4,675,194	5,125,438	6,168,992	6,518,591
Cost of sales	(4,346,010)	(4,733,254)	(5,905,638)	(6,165,141)
Gross Profit	329,184	392,183	263,354	353,450
General and administration expenses	(215,673)	(294,213)	(258,273)	(343,448)
Investment and Other Income	7,627	7,710	9,936	9,936
Profit for the period before tax	121,138	105,680	15,016	19,938
Provision for Income tax	(18,171)	(21,602)	(2,252)	(3,379)
Net Profit for the period after tax	102,967	84,078	12,764	16,557
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income	102,967	84,078	12,764	16,557
Earnings per share	0.003	0.003	0.000	0.001

Note: The complete account will be sent by email to any Shareholders who request them in either Arabic or English as requested within 7 days of the request.

SEPARATE AND CONSOLIDATED UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT MARCH 31, 2026

	31 March 2026		31 March 2025		31 December 2025	
	Parent ﷮	Group ﷮	Parent ﷮	Group ﷮	Parent ﷮	Group ﷮
ASSETS						
Non-current Assets:						
Property, plant and equipment	2,988,030	3,415,997	2,579,504	2,905,010	3,032,227	3,404,324
Right of use assets	273,280	273,280	200,294	200,294	276,292	276,292
Deferred Tax Asset	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment	2,004,118	-	2,004,118	-	2,004,118	-
Goodwill	-	996,800	-	996,800	-	996,800
Trade Receivable	490,558	490,558	-	-	490,558	490,558
Total Non-current Assets	5,755,986	5,176,636	4,783,916	4,102,104	5,803,195	5,167,974
Current Assets:						
Inventories	934,373	1,152,157	2,580,093	2,772,114	876,604	1,105,346
Trade and other receivables	2,974,359	3,149,827	5,140,977	5,030,281	3,255,200	3,195,853
Cash and cash equivalents	1,786,829	1,981,417	640,837	832,547	1,676,146	1,915,049
Total Current Assets	5,695,561	6,283,402	8,361,907	8,634,942	5,807,950	6,216,249
TOTAL ASSETS	11,451,547	11,460,038	13,145,823	12,737,046	11,611,145	11,384,222
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES						
Equity:						
Share capital	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000
Statutory reserve	1,000,000	1,015,863	1,000,000	1,013,094	1,000,000	1,015,863
Special reserve	1,457,067	1,457,067	1,457,067	1,457,067	1,457,067	1,457,067
Land revaluation reserve	1,292,166	1,370,366	807,666	807,666	1,292,166	1,370,366
Retained earnings	(700,216)	(808,663)	(379,473)	(532,163)	(803,183)	(884,548)
Total Equity	6,049,017	6,034,633	5,885,260	5,745,664	5,946,050	5,958,748
Non-current Liabilities:						
End of service benefits	125,810	168,512	126,682	154,999	144,223	185,204
Non current portion of Term Loan	324,541	324,541	-	-	-	-
Non current portion of lease liabilities	-	-	243,732	243,732	323,995	323,995
Deferred tax	115,605	130,770	106,778	112,164	115,605	128,657
Total Non-current Liabilities	565,956	623,823	477,192	510,895	583,823	637,856
Current Liabilities:						
Trade and other payables	4,180,941	4,132,751	6,434,365	6,125,576	4,638,013	4,334,471
Bank overdraft	602,147	602,147	312,760	312,760	413,115	413,115
Current portion of Term Loan	-	-	-	-	-	-
Current portion of lease liabilities	15,097	15,097	13,776	13,776	9,926	9,926
Income Tax	38,389	51,588	22,470	28,375	20,218	30,106
Total Current Liabilities	4,836,574	4,801,582	6,783,371	6,480,487	5,081,272	4,787,618
Total Liabilities	5,402,530	5,425,405	7,260,563	6,991,382	5,665,095	5,425,474
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	11,451,547	11,460,038	13,145,823	12,737,046	11,611,145	11,384,222
Net Assets Per Share (﷮)	0.202	0.201	0.196	0.192	0.198	0.199



OMAN

ITEMS OF DISPUTE ADDRESSED

State and Shura Councils hold joint session

MUSCAT: The State Council and Shura Councils held yesterday their second joint session of the third regular annual sitting of the eighth term of the Council of Oman. The session discussed the reports of the joint committees of the two Councils concerning items of dispute in the draft law on the "Unified System for International Land Transport between

GCC States.”

The session, chaired by Sheikh Abdulmalik bin Abdullah Al Khalili, Chairman of the State Council, addressed the following draft laws referred by the Council of Ministers: Draft Law Amending Certain Provisions of the Personal Data Protection Law, Draft Law on Combating Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances, Draft Law

Amending Certain Provisions of
the Penal Code, and Draft Law
Amending Certain Provisions of
the Mineral Wealth Law.

The session was attended by Khalid bin Hilal Al Maawali, Chairman of the Shura Council, along with members of the State Council and Shura Councils, as well as the Secretaries General of both Councils. — **ONA**



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Oman-Canada: An evolving model of diplomatic and economic cooperation

Political relations between the two nations are witnessing high-level momentum, evidenced by direct phone calls involving His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik with Canadian side



and cultural trajectories.

Political relationships between the two nations are witnessing high-level momentum, evidenced by direct phone calls involving His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik with the Canadian side. These included two phone calls from former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and a phone call from Mark Carney, the current Prime Minister of Canada.

This is in addition to ongoing diplomatic meetings and mutual consultations between the foreign ministers of both countries at international forums, such as the United Nations General Assembly in New York, to coordinate positions and exchange views.

In terms of diplomatic representation, Jean-Philippe Linteau has served as the non-resident

Ambassador of Canada to the Sultanate of Oman since his appointment in May 2023. Meanwhile, Ali Kamal Daud, Chairman of the Oman American Business Centre, assumes the duties of the Honorary Consul of Canada in Muscat. Conversely, Talal bin Sulaiman Al Rahbi, the Sultanate of Oman's Ambassador to the United States of America, has received approval to present his credentials as Oman's non-resident Ambassador to Canada. Within the framework of official visits aimed at consolidating economic ties, Scott Gilmore, Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Canada, paid an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman on 29 April 2026. During the visit, he met with the Foreign Minister to discuss promising investment opportunities.

These visits build upon the strategic report submitted by Robert Oliphant, Parliamentary Secretary to the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, following his visit to the Sultanate of Oman in November 2022. In the report, he emphasized to the Canadian Foreign Ministry the necessity of enhancing cooperation with the Sultanate of Oman given its pivotal role in addressing regional challenges.

The mining and energy sector represents one of the most prominent pillars of current economic cooperation. A specialised Canadian trade delegation visited the Ministry of Energy and Minerals from 19-20 January 2026, to explore opportunities for technical partnership and investment in the mineral wealth of the Sultanate of Oman.

These aspirations are further reflected in the intensive meetings held by the non-resident Canadian Ambassador with the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, the Chief Executive Officer of Energy Development Oman, and the Chief Executive Officer of Minerals Development Oman.

Notably, Canadian investments maintain a solid presence in the Omani market, with approximately 280 Canadian companies operating with an estimated total capital of around OMR37 million.

On the cultural and educational front, academic cooperation stands out as a primary driver for bridging perspectives between the two peoples.

Oman sponsors over 250 male and female students to complete their undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Canadian educational institutions. This includes sending doctors and medical professionals from the Ministry of Health to benefit from advanced medical expertise in Canada.

Regarding Canada's domestic sphere and global economic indicators for 2025, Canada ranks as the tenth-largest economy in the world with a GDP of \$2.3 trillion.

This is supported by a diversified industrial base combining traditional industries such as oil, gas, mining, and timber, with high-val-

ue-added advanced industries like aerospace manufacturing through the pioneering company “Bombardier,” and the automotive industry, which is structurally linked to the American market. This is coupled with the accelerated growth of the software, space technology, and artificial intelligence sectors.

Canada is the second-largest country in the world by land area and possesses the longest international coastline. It contains approximately 20 percent of the Earth's freshwater, which contributes to securing 60 percent of its electricity needs through hydroelectric power. The country is characterised by a low population density of about 4.5 people per square kilometre, with a total population reaching 40 million people (compared to 17 people per square kilometre in the Sultanate of Oman).

The Canadian political landscape has witnessed fundamental transformations following the resignation of former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau after nine years in office. Mark Carney assumed the position of Prime Minister in March 2025, inaugurating a new phase that included launching a Canadian sovereign wealth fund, reducing interprovincial trade barriers, and expanding defence spending. — **UNA**

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Empowering Businesses

PRESENTS



10TH JUNE, 2026
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The Next Level of Customer Experience Starts Here.

Oman CX Forum 2026 brings together CX leaders, experts and solution providers to foster innovation, share actionable insights and advance customer experience excellence across industries.



10+
SPEAKERS



400+
DELEGATES



80+
COMPANIES

FOCUS AREAS

- Digital transformation in CX
- AI-powered customer engagement
- Personalization at scale
- Omnichannel excellence
- CX-driven revenue growth
- Data privacy and trust
- Employee experience (EX)
- Measuring CX success

OMAN CX AWARDS 2026

Oman's top brands across 40+ product and service categories—selected through extensive consumer voting—will be honoured with the 'Times of Oman Best Brand in Customer Experience Award', while select CX industry leaders will also be felicitated at the Oman CX Awards 2026.



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SPORTS

GT's Rabada, Holder blow away SRH

Gujarat Titans sealed their biggest victory to go top and handed SRH their biggest defeat

AHMEDABAD: Gujarat Titans surged to the top of the IPL table with a crushing 82-run victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad as their pace battery, led by Kagiso Rabada and Jason Holder, dismantled the visitors for just 86 in Ahmedabad on Tuesday.

On a treacherous surface where stroke-making was anything but straightforward, GT recovered from early trouble through B Sai Sudharsan (61) and Washington Sundar (50) before their fast bowlers turned the contest into a one-sided affair.

The emphatic win, their biggest in IPL history, lifted Gujarat to 16 points and underlined their growing status as the team to beat this season.

On a pitch offering seam movement, uneven bounce and grip off

the surface, Gujarat themselves were reduced to 34 for 2 in the powerplay after Praful Hinge struck twice for Hyderabad. Shubman Gill miscued an ambitious across-the-line stroke and departed early, while Jos Buttler's attempted scoop only managed a faint edge behind.

At that stage, GT were in danger of wasting the opportunity to post a competitive total, but Sai Sudharsan once again showcased why he has been among the most consistent batters this season. The left-hander punished anything overpitched and rotated strike intelligently when boundaries dried up.

Nishant Sindhu contributed a useful 22 off 14 balls, helping stabilise the innings through the middle overs before Pat Cummins



returned to remove him with a sharp lifting delivery. Sudharsan, meanwhile, brought up his sixth half-century of the season with a composed 61 from 44 deliveries before falling attempting an improvised scoop off Sakib Hussain.

Washington Sundar then provided the late flourish Gujarat desperately needed. The all-rounder slammed 50 off 33 balls to transform GT's innings from merely respectable to highly competitive as they

closed on 168 for 5. It soon became clear it was more than enough.

Mohammed Siraj and Rabada produced a devastating opening burst that virtually ended the chase inside the powerplay. Hyderabad slumped to 32 for 4 as Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan and Ravichandran Smaran all fell cheaply.

Rabada was particularly menacing, repeatedly hitting the hard length at close to 150kph while



shaping the ball away from the left-handers.

Abhishek chopped one back onto his stumps, Kishan edged while driving away from his body, and Smaran mistimed a catch to cover. Rabada completed his spell in one go, finishing with superb figures of 3 for 28.

Holder then ensured there would be no comeback. Using his height cleverly and mixing pace with slower deliveries as the surface deteriorated further, the West Indian removed Heinrich Klaasen, Nitish Kumar Reddy and Shivang Kumar to finish with 3 for 20.

Prasidh Krishna added further misery with 2 for 23, while Hyderabad never recovered from the early collapse. Captain Cummins top-scored with just 19 as SRH were bundled out in only 14.5 overs.

Brief scores: Gujarat Titans 168/5 (B Sai Sudharsan 61, Washington Sundar 50; Praful Hinge 2-17, Sakib Hussain 2-37) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad 86 in 14.5 overs (Pat Cummins 19; Jason Holder 3-20, Kagiso Rabada 3-28, Prasidh Krishna 2-23) by 82 runs. - Agencies



أنفق
SPEND
10

أحصل
GET
5

VOUCHER

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GARMENTS • FOOTWEAR • LADIES BAGS
BABY ACCESSORIES

Selected Products only

For every 10 spent, get back 5 worth Shopping Voucher
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11 - 31 May 2026

Lulu

FASHION STORE

SUFYAN NAMED SKIPPER

All-Omani cricket squad eyes historic Asian Games berth



Times News Service

MUSCAT: A new chapter in the country's cricket journey begins next month as an all-Omani squad competes in the Asian Games Men's Qualifier in Singapore under the captaincy of Sufyan Mehmood.

The 14-member side, made up entirely of homegrown talent, marks a milestone in Oman cricket's development as the ambitious squad prepares for its maiden appearance on the continental stage. The T20I qualifiers, featuring 13 nations, will be held from May 31 to June 9.

Oman begin their Group B campaign against Maldives on June 1 before facing hosts Singapore on June 3.

Under the tournament format, the top two teams from each of the four groups will advance to the quarter-finals, with the four winners progressing to the semi-finals and securing qualification for the Asian Games.

Apart from Oman, Maldives and Singapore in Group B, the other teams competing for four qualification spots at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, are Nepal, Thailand and Indonesia (Group A); Hong Kong, Bahrain and South Korea (Group C); and Malaysia, Qatar, China and Uzbekistan (Group D).

The top four teams from the qualifiers will join defending champions India, along with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and hosts Japan at the Asian Games, scheduled from September 17 to October 3.

With vice-captain Muzaffar Shiralkar as his deputy, Sufyan will lead a youthful squad featuring Mohammed Al Balushi, Shoaib Al Balushi, Zubair Al Balushi, Abdul Jalil, Issa Al Balushi, Samir Yousuf, Naveed Al Balushi, Ahmed Al Zadjali, Wasim Al Balushi, Faris Al Balushi, Rashad Al Balushi and Munthir Al Balushi.

The team, coached by former Oman skipper Sultan Ahmed, will depart in the final week of May and arrive early in Singapore to acclimatise to conditions and play preparatory matches ahead of the tournament.

With the aim of building a competitive side for the Asian Games, Oman Cricket (OC) launched the all-Omani team project in March 2025. The initiative aims to develop a fully Omani squad as cricket strengthens its presence in multi-sport events such as the Asian Games and Olympics.

The squad has already gained

valuable exposure through a bilateral series against Bahrain last year, where Oman suffered a narrow 1-2 defeat.

To further strengthen the programme, OC has introduced player contracts to support the squad's semi-professional development while ensuring access to national-team-level coaching, fitness and preparation facilities.

The entire programme and tour are being funded directly by Oman Cricket, underlining its long-term commitment to nurturing domestic talent.

Captain Mehmood highlighted the significance of the opportunity.

"It is great to lead an all-Omani team as we bid to make history by qualifying for the Asian Games. It would be a proud moment for Oman cricket if we qualify. It's a huge platform for the players, especially with many of them set to make their T20 international debut. Hopefully, we can achieve the desired results, and I can use my experience to help the team qualify," he said.

Team manager Said Haider Al Balushi also underlined the importance of the project.

He said: "The Omani cricket team has been prepared over the course of a full year through a structured plan and intensive efforts by both the coaching staff and players in preparation for the Asian Games qualification tournament. The team proudly features a group of ambitious Omani youth, and we wish them every success on the international stage."

He added that the initiative aligns with Oman Vision 2040 and reflects the country's commitment to empowering youth through sport.

"It is our honour to represent our beloved nation in regional and international competitions, carrying the flag of Oman with pride and dedication," he added.

The support staff also includes assistant coach Parviz Al Balushi and physiotherapist Saravanan.

Oman squad: Sufyan Mehmood (captain), Muzaffar Shiralkar (vice-captain), Mohammed Al Balushi, Shoaib Al Balushi, Zubair Al Balushi, Abdul Jalil, Issa Al Balushi, Samir Yousuf, Naveed Al Balushi, Ahmed Al Zadjali, Wasim Al Balushi, Faris Al Balushi, Rashad Al Balushi, Munthir Al Balushi.

Support staff: Coach Sultan Ahmed, asst coach Parviz Al Balushi, manager Said Haider Al Balushi, physiotherapist Saravanan.

OMAN OIL PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman crude oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by June 2026 reaching \$104.64. The price of Oman crude oil fell by 10 cents from the price of Tuesday, which was \$104.74.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 8,178.76 points, down by -1.28% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.38% at 657.50 points. Al Madina Investments, up 2.70%, was the top gainer while, Dhofar Insurance, down 8.90%, was the top loser.

Nama advances water security with aquifer storage technology

The project reflects a transformational shift in proactive water management and crisis preparedness, through the establishment of strategic underground water reserves that can be recovered during emergencies and peak demand periods



adaptive water system.

The project reflects a transformational shift in proactive water management and crisis preparedness, through the establishment of strategic underground water reserves that can be recovered during emergencies and peak demand periods.

The water injection process is based on a sustainable aquifer recharge technology, whereby excess desalinated water produced during periods outside peak demand is injected directly into underground aquifers for storage and later recovery when needed for potable, industrial and agricultural uses, contributing to the efficient management of water resources.

Eng. Ibrahim Mohamed Al Harthi, Chief Planning and Asset Management Officer, said the Aquifer Storage and Recovery project using water injection technology is among Nama Water Services' strategic projects aimed at strengthening Oman's water security and supporting the objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

He noted that the project responds to the increasing demand



for water, which is expected to grow by nearly 3 per cent annually as a result of population growth, urban expansion and economic development across the Sultanate.

Al Harthi added that Oman's total water production during 2025 reached approximately 445 million cubic metres, with around 90 per cent supplied through desalination plants and the remaining 10 per cent sourced from ground-water resources.

He explained that the project reflects Nama Water Services' commitment to innovation, scientific research and academic partnerships, aiming to establish a strategic water reserve by utilizing underground aquifers through the injection of desalinated water during low-demand periods – typically in winter – and recovering it when required, particularly during emergencies or periods of peak consumption.

"This project represents a strategic step towards enhancing the

resilience, reliability and sustainability of Oman's water supply system," he said.

Al Harthi underscored that the importance of the project is expected to grow further in light of increasing water demand, climate change challenges and the need for proactive crisis management to ensure sustainable water security.

He explained that water injection technology is considered one of the advanced operational solutions that enhance efficiency by enabling water to be stored and recovered without requiring major re-treatment processes, while maintaining water quality through controlled storage conditions, based on scientific studies and field trials conducted as part of the project.

A field pilot is currently being implemented in the Sharqiyah Sands aquifer basin in South Al Sharqiyah Governorate to evaluate the efficiency of the technology before expanding its application on a wider scale.

The selected sites are estimated to have a storage capacity ranging between 18 million and 30 million cubic metres. Water is injected at depths ranging from 80 to 120 metres to reach protected underground aquifers and safeguard them against surface contamination.

The site selection process was based on detailed hydrogeological studies, including soil analysis, experimental drilling and scientific modelling to ensure the safety and sustainability of storage and recovery operations without affecting the environment or existing water resources. Additional criteria included proximity to water transmission networks and surrounding agricultural and commercial activities.

For his part, Eng. Abdulhakim bin Amur Al Dhhli, Master Planning & Strategic Investments Manager, said the project is expected to significantly enhance water security by reducing reliance on desalination plants during peak demand periods and improving the efficiency of water resource management.

He added that the project will also support interconnection plans between governorates, with the Sharqiyah Sands field expected to serve North and South Al Sharqiyah as well as Al Dakhiliyah Governorates following the completion of water transmission interconnection projects.

The project is also expected to reduce operational pressure on desalination plants during peak periods while improving energy efficiency through the transition from immediate production to a strategic storage-based operational model. This is anticipated to lower energy consumption within the

water production and transmission system associated with the project, contributing to reduced emissions, lower operational loads and enhanced long-term sustainability.

Al Dhhli noted that the project is being implemented in cooperation with several strategic partners, including Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, the Water Research Center at Sultan Qaboos University and German University of Technology in Oman, in addition to international institutions to ensure the successful implementation of the initiative and support a transformative shift towards a more resilient and future-ready water management system.

He added that the project paves the way for applying this technology in other locations across the Sultanate, further strengthening the development of a sustainable and adaptive national water system capable of responding to future challenges while supporting the sustainability and water security goals of Oman Vision 2040.

Nama Water Services continues to implement an integrated water sustainability strategy focused on reducing non-revenue water through AI-enabled network modernization and strengthening water resources through international best practices in demand management.

The strategy also includes investing in wastewater treatment and water reuse for industrial and agricultural applications, expanding strategic water infrastructure across the governorates it serves and accelerating digital transformation through advanced geographic information systems to improve operational efficiency.

OMAN REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE



BankDhofar showcases investment solutions

MUSCAT: BankDhofar participated in the 21st edition of the Oman Real Estate Conference and Design & Build Week, held from 10 to 13 May at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, with broad participation from real estate experts, project developers, and local and international investors.

This participation reflected the bank's commitment to strengthening its presence at leading economic events, supporting efforts to enhance integration across various sectors, and reinforcing strategic partnerships with both government and private entities. These efforts contribute to supporting sustainable urban development and shaping the future of urban planning in Oman.

The conference highlighted a range of key themes aligned with the rapid economic and urban transformations in Oman, including real estate investment, capital markets, sustainability, digital transformation, modern property technologies (PropTech), as well as supply chains and construction execution processes. The event also served as a key platform for knowledge exchange and showcasing best practices in urban development and investment enhancement.

BankDhofar signed a strategic agreement with Nama Real Estate to provide financing solutions for investors purchasing residential units in Al Namaa Neighbourhood, located in the

Wilayat of Izki, as part of the Surouh Program supervised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning. The agreement was signed by Ahmed bin Said Al Ibrahim, Chief Retail and Government Banking Officer on behalf of BankDhofar, while Hilal Al Hawqani, Chairman signed on behalf of Nama Real Estate.

Through its participation, BankDhofar aims to position itself as a key financial partner within the real estate ecosystem, strengthen relationships with developers and investors, and expand collaboration with government and semi-government entities. The bank also seeks to promote a comprehensive suite of financing and investment solutions that cater to both individual and corporate needs, while enhancing its brand presence as a leading bank supporting urban development in Oman.

BankDhofar's housing finance solutions are characterized by high flexibility and competitiveness, with interest rates starting from 4.35%, fast processing times, simplified procedures, and repayment plans extending up to 25 years. The bank offers financing of up to OMR 350,000 or up to 90% of the property value, along with a variety of options tailored to different needs, including purchasing a home or land, building a new property, renovating existing properties, or transferring loans from other banks.

FINANCIAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Meeting discusses ways to develop capital markets

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Represented by the Financial Services Authority (FSA), the Sultanate of Oman on Wednesday took part in the 51st annual conference of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO), held via video-conferencing.

The conference included a meeting of the Growth and Emerging Markets Committee (GEMC) and a meeting of the Africa and Middle

East Committee (AMERC).

The FSA was represented at the IOSCO meetings by Ahmed bin Ali Al Ma'amari, Deputy CEO of the Financial Services Authority.

The meeting of the GEMC discussed ways to develop capital markets and mechanisms on enhancing capacity building. It also elaborated on policies and experiences that support the efficiency of markets and their global ranking.

The meeting also discussed developments in global debt

and the risks posed to emerging markets, in addition to member countries' experiences in implementing initiatives to develop markets and raise their rankings in global indices.

The GEMC comprises 94 members, including the world's fastest-growing economies and 10 countries from the Group of Twenty (G20). The meeting of Africa and Middle East Committee dealt with the resilience of financial markets amid geopolitical challenges. It also

reviewed the role of regulatory technology in developing audit methods.

The meeting reviewed the latest trends related to the use of modern technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) in oversight action, as well as challenges related to boosting data quality, cybersecurity and technical integration.

AMERC is one of the IOSCO's four regional panels. It focuses on regional issues related to securities regulation in the Africa and Middle East region.

COMMENTARY

Beyond the headlines: Rethinking success and failure in Omani mediation



BY MURTADHA BIN
HASAN BIN ALI

In the midst of the controversy sparked by former U.S. Ambassador Marc J. Sievers' article on what he described as "the failure of Omani diplomacy," there is an urgent need for a measured reading—one that moves beyond reactive responses and returns the discussion to its professional framework: What is mediation? And by what standards is its success or failure measured?

First, it must be clarified that mediation, in the lexicon of international relations, is not a magic tool that prevents wars. Rather, it is a complex process aimed at reducing the likelihood of war, or containing it once it breaks out. Modern history—from the Camp David Accords negotiations to the Iranian nuclear deal talks—has shown that reaching major settlements takes years of quiet work, often passing through stages of setbacks and collapse before coming to light. Therefore, linking the success of mediation to an immediate outcome—such as preventing a specific war—is a reductive oversimplification that does not align with the very nature

of diplomacy.

From this perspective, assessing Oman's role through the lens of "Why didn't it prevent the war?" is a flawed question at its core. States do not abandon their strategic choices because of a mediator's advice, no matter how trusted that mediator may be. The mediator possesses tools of persuasion, not coercion. If major powers like the United States, or regional powers like Iran, choose to follow their own paths, then holding the mediator responsible for that is akin to blaming a doctor for a patient's refusal to undergo treatment.

The second point concerns understanding the nature of Omani foreign policy. For decades, the Sultanate of Oman has adopted an approach based on "positive neutrality"—not in the sense of passively keeping an equal distance from everyone, but rather engaging with different parties to keep dialogue channels open. This approach has never been about taking sides; it has been a strategic choice to protect stability in a highly sensitive region, especially around a vital waterway like the Strait of Hormuz.

Engaging with all parties, including Iran or actors in Yemen, is not a departure from neutrality; it is a prerequisite for any effective mediation. A mediator who severs ties with one party loses their ability to influence. Perhaps here lies one of the points of divergence between

the Omani perspective and certain American readings, which tend—in moments of tension—to reduce international relations to a binary of "with me or against me," whereas mediation by its very nature breaks that binary.

Third, it is important to distinguish between the "outcomes of mediation" and the "impact of mediation." Even when efforts do not lead to a final agreement, they often yield indirect gains: preventing full-scale escalation, delaying confrontations, or maintaining communication lines that could prove critical in moments of crisis. These roles are not measured by headlines, but by quiet accumulations that decision-making circles recognize more than the public does.

In this context, it cannot be ignored that Muscat remained, even at the height of tensions, a meeting point for senior officials and diplomats from various sides. This continuous presence is not diplomatic courtesy; it reflects accumulated trust in Oman's ability to provide a safe space for dialogue, away from media and political pressures. Effective diplomacy is not conducted on screens, but in rooms where trust is built patiently and quietly.

As for the criticism of some public statements by Omani officials, perhaps a different reading is needed. Expressing concern over escalation, or noting missed opportunities for agreement, is not a departure from "diplomatic silence"—rather, it is often an attempt

to sound the alarm before it is too late. In a fast-moving world, a voice of reason can remind parties of the cost of the choices they make.

Moreover, this discussion cannot be separated from the broader shifts in the international system. Today, the world is witnessing a decline in the effectiveness of traditional tools of influence and the rise of more independent regional roles. In this context, Omani policy resembles the model of a "bridge state" that seeks to narrow gaps between adversaries, rather than engaging in polarising axes.

Differences in assessing Oman's role should not devolve into questioning its intentions or capabilities, but rather into an opportunity for a deeper understanding of the nature of mediation in a turbulent world. Diplomacy is not a zero-sum match, but a long process measured by its ability to keep doors open when they are shut elsewhere.

In the end, mediation may not prevent every war, but it remains one of the most important tools to reduce wars or limit their impact. Oman, with its history and approach, has chosen to be part of that effort—not part of the camps of escalation. Between those who measure success by immediate results and those who see it in the accumulations of stability, the true judgment will depend on what the years reveal, not on the dictates of a moment of emotion.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Al Madina Investments, up 2.70%, was the top gainer while, Dhofar Insurance, down 8.90%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 8,178.76 points, down by -1.28% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by -0.38% at 657.50 points.

Al Madina Investments, up 2.70%, was the top gainer while, Dhofar Insurance, down 8.90%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 5782 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 39.08 million, with more than 121.76 million shares changing hands. Out of 76 traded securities, 13 advanced, 39 declined, and 24 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 1943K while GCC & Arab investors were net sellers for RO 1525K, followed by foreign investors for RO 418K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 13,122.07 points, down -0.84%. Prices of Al Madina Investments, National Bank Oman,

Bank Nizwa were up by 2.70%, 0.71%, 0.68% respectively. Prices of Dhofar Insurance, Financial Corporation, Sohar International Bank, Takaful Oman, DIDIC were down by 8.90%, 7.76%, 4.39%, 2.78%, 2.37% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 10,136.41 points, down -0.48%. Prices of Galfar Engineering, Construction Materials, Oman Cement, Voltamp Energy were up by 2.24%, 1.25%, 1.09%, 0.79% respectively. Prices of Oman Fisheries, Jazeera Steel Products, Dhofar Cattle Feed, Raysut Cement, Muscat Thread Mill were down by 3.57%, 3.23%, 1.91%, 1.90%, 1.86% respectively.

Services Index was down by -0.69% before closing at 3,290.81 points. Prices of Phoenix Power, National Gas, Al Suwadi Power were up by 1.75%, 0.85%, 0.50% respectively. Prices of Sembcorp Salalah, OQ Gas Networks, Oman Oil Marketing, Ooredoo, OQ Exploration & Production were down by 1.89%, 1.83%, 1.50%, 1.39%, 1.00% respectively. – United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff.	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	8,297.06	8,172.79	8,178.76	8,285.22	-106.46	-1.28%
FINANCIAL INDEX	13,249.44	13,117.34	13,122.07	13,232.58	-110.51	-0.84%
Industry Index	10,200.67	10,097.85	10,136.41	10,185.48	-49.07	-0.48%
Services Index	3,320.64	3,289.75	3,290.81	3,313.78	-22.98	-0.69%
MSX Shariah Index	660.90	654.73	657.50	660.00	-2.50	-0.38%
MSX TR INDEX	12,911.11	12,919.23	12,928.46	12,792.84	135.62	1.28%
FINANCIAL TR IDX	16,256.86	16,094.78	16,100.59	16,236.18	-135.59	-0.84%
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	13,064.47	12,932.78	12,982.17	13,045.02	-62.85	-0.48%
SERVICES TR IDX	4,437.24	4,395.96	4,397.37	4,428.08	-30.70	-0.69%
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,209.68	1,209.68	1,209.68	1,209.68	0.00	0.00%

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
121,762,893	39,083,554	5,782	37,901,700,746	13	39	24	76

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR WEDNESDAY, MAY 13

SEC.	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST RD	LAST OFFER	PUR VALUE	MARKET CAP
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REGULAR MARKET

OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	973,079	225,482	84	0.230	0.234	0.230	0.233	0.229	0.004	1.747	0.233	0.233	0.233	0.100	340,786,140
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	61,400	33,914	13	0.551	0.556	0.551	0.556	0.550	0.006	1.091	0.555	0.555	0.556	0.100	183,965,227
OM0000003681	VOLTAMP ENERGY	53,850	100,888	29	1.840	1.905	1.840	1.905	1.890	0.015	0.794	1.905	1.951	1.900	0.100	190,500,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	758,500	322,199	14	0.424	0.430	0.424	0.425	0.422	0.003	0.711	0.425	0.425	0.433	0.100	691,027,201
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	370,288	54,861	39	0.148	0.149	0.148	0.149	0.148	0.001	0.676	0.149	0.149	0.149	0.100	333,306,002
OM0000004433	AL SUWADI POWER	597,984	119,775	60	0.200	0.203	0.199	0.200	0.199	0.001	0.503	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.100	142,881,288
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	9,694	3,538	2	0.365	0.365	0.365	0.365	0.365	0.000	0.000	0.365	0.365	0.368	0.100	38,325,000
OM0000001881	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	59,112	10,167	10	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.172	0.000	0.000	0.172	0.172	0.173	0.100	20,962,500
OM0000000287	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	75,750	32,034	9	0.424	0.424	0.422	0.424	0.424	0.000	0.000	0.424	0.421	0.431	0.100	21,345,168
OM0000003440	AL SHARQIA INVESTMENT HO.	145,100	16,367	14	0.112	0.113	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.000	0.000	0.112	0.112	0.112	0.100	10,880,000
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	39,364	14,166	7	0.360	0.360	0.359	0.360	0.360	0.000	0.000	0.360	0.359	0.360	0.100	85,107,600
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	193,271	24,095	15	0.124	0.125	0.124	0.124	0.124	0.000	0.000	0.124	0.122	0.125	0.100	21,700,000
OM0000004925	ALBATHNAH POWER	355,005	71,610	38	0.201	0.202	0.200	0.201	0.201	0.000	0.000	0.201	0.197	0.201	0.100	135,652,373
OM0000001707	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	12,850	37,318	8	2.960	2.960	2.960	2.945	2.950	-0.005	-0.169	2.945	2.880	2.945	0.100	264,166,500
OM0000003000	AI MAHA PETROLEUM PROD MARKETING	10,000	11,520	2	1.152	1.152	1.152	1.152	1.155	-0.003	-0.260	1.152	1.050	1.152	0.100	79,488,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	40,500	13,236	5	0.329	0.332	0.329	0.332	0.333	-0.001	-0.300	0.332	0.321	0.332	0.100	66,400,000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	589,638	284,128	247	0.481	0.481	0.489	0.489	0.491	-0.002	-0.407	0.489	0.488	0.489	0.100	370,627,800
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	20,335	4,470	3	0.220	0.220	0.219	0.219	0.220	-0.001	-0.455	0.219	0.219	0.225	0.100	43,720,196
OM0000002549	BANK DHOFAR	2,498,681	547,878	271	0.220	0.220	0.218	0.218	0.219	-0.001	-0.457	0.218	0.220	0.218	0.100	662,676,080
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	45,674	8,311	7	0.182	0.182	0.181	0.181	0.182	-0.001	-0.549	0.181	0.181	0.184	0.100	54,038,981
OM0000002077	AL OMANIYA FINANCIAL SERVICES	55,000	9,020	2	0.164	0.164	0.164	0.164	0.165	-0.001	-0.606	0.164	0.164	0.164	0.100	51,728,388
OM0000001010	ASTAD SHIPPING	2,860,642	875,838	391	0.306	0.308	0.303	0.304	0.306	-0.002	-0.654	0.304	0.304	0.304	0.000	1,583,458,261
OM0000002236	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	19,443	5,648	6	0.292	0.292	0.290	0.292	0.294	-0.002	-0.680	0.292	0.290	0.292	0.100	12,510,153
OM0000009608	OQBASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	25,346,069	8,180,765	858	0.322	0.324	0.318	0.319	0.322	-0.003	-0.932	0.319	0.290	0.319	0.040	1,103,577,581
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	8,976,842	4,456,486	316	0.500	0.500	0.493	0.495	0.500	-0.005	-1.000	0.495	0.494	0.495	0.010	3,960,000,000
OM0000001353	OMINVEST	135,910	51,760	14	0.385	0.385	0.380	0.381	0.385	-0.004	-1.039	0.381	0.360	0.382	0.100	427,807,242
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	144,000	13,002	8	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.090	0.091	-0.001	-1.099	0.090	0.090	0.092	0.100	32,051,457
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	197,964	70,808	35	0.359	0.360	0.355	0.360	0.360	-0.005	-1.389	0.355	0.355	0.357	0.100	231,065,202
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	284	336	1	1.182	1.182	1.182	1.182	1.200	-0.018	-1.500	1.182	1.182	1.200	0.100	72,427,050
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	15,758,950	4,256,061	953	0.273	0.274	0.267	0.268	0.273	-0.005	-1.832	0.268	0.246	0.268	0.100	1,169,607,211
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	1,056,793	279,159	121	0.263	0.268	0.260	0.260	0.265	-0.005	-1.887	0.260	0.260	0.260	0.100	248,188,707
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	2,401,166	3,471,938	169	1.460	1.460	1.428	1.432	1.460	-0.028	-1.918	1.432	1.606	1.432	0.100	1,074,000,000
OM0000002786	BANK MUSCAT	13,483,506	6,017,099	623	0.449	0.451	0.440	0.440	0.449	-0.009	-2.004	0.440	0.444	0.440	0.100	3,302,814,707
OM0000001509	DHOFAH INTL DEVPT & INVESTMENT	102,882	34,141	26	0.338	0.338	0.329	0.330	0.338	-0.008	-2.367	0.330	0.330	0.333	0.100	163,698,527
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	1,000	755	2	0.760	0.760	0.750	0.750	0.775	-0.025	-3.226	0.750	0.755	0.800	0.100	93,673,470
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	38,888,575	8,741,450	949	0.228	0.228	0.218	0.218	0.228	-0.010	-4.386	0.218	0.218	0.220	0.100	1,442,559,687
Total		36	116,351,131	38,410,311	5,391											

Parallel Market

OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	340	13	1	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.038	0.037	0.001	2.703	0.038	0.036	0.039	0.100	3,230,000
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	22,724	4,090	7	0.180	0.183	0.179	0.183	0.179	0.004	2.235	0.183	0.180	0.180	0.100	37,146,530
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	5,000	405	1	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.081	0.080	0.001	1.250	0.081	0.080	0.088	0.100	5,062,500
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	2,200	241	4	0.109	0.110	0.109	0.109	0.108	0.001	0.928	0.109	0.100	0.109	0.100	71,105,308
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	327,027	39,246	31	0.120	0.123	0.119	0.119	0.118	0.001	0.847	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.100	10,115,000
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	14,340	2,124	2	0.150	0.150	0.148	0.148	0.148	0.000	0.000	0.148	0.148	0.152	0.100	4,440,000
OM0000001384	FINANCIAL SERVICES	1,538	369	1	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.000	0.240	0.240	0.000	0.100	4,800,000
OM0000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	1,500	2,100	1	1.400	1.400	1.400	1.400	1.400	0.000	0.000	1.400	0.000	1.400	0.100	70,000,000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	122,577	9,128	8	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	22,728,828
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	57,798	4,572	8	0.079	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.080	0.079	0.080	0.100	1,080,000
OM0000003711	OMINVEST	560	127	2	0.256	0.256	0.256	0.256	0.256	0.000	0.000	0.256	0.235	0.248	0.100	4,400,000
OM0000003690	OMAN ARAB BANK	10,200	2,101	2	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.000	0.000	0.206	0.205	0.206	0.100	412,565,127
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	19,432	2,041	6	0.105	0.106	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.000	0.000	0.105	0.103	0.108	0.100	16,332,792
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	13,816	1,245	8	0.090	0.091	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.000	0.000	0.090	0.089	0.090	0.100	20,001,600
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	2,060	367	3	0.178	0.178	0.178	0.178	0.178	0.000	0.000	0.178	0.175	0.178	0.100	105,275,765
OM00000010823	OMAN GATEWAY FUND	600	674	2	0.120	0.125	0.120	0.125	0.125	0.000	0.000	0.125	0.125	0.127	0.000	30,763,405
OM0000001897	MAJAN COLLEGE	10,401	1,352	4	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.130	0.131	-0.001	-0.763	0.130	0.125	0.131	0.100	12,870,000
OM0000003281	TAAQEER FINANCE	100,000	11,900	1	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.119	0.001	-0.833	0.119	0.116	0.127	0.100	33,759,203
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	0.388	5,290	12	0.590	0.590	0.560	0.560	0.565	-0.005	-0.885	0.560	0.560	0.561	0.100	97,240,500
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	676,919	147,668	15	0.218	0.220	0.218	0.218	0.218	0.002	-0.909	0.218	0.218	0.224	0.100	141,851,000
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	7,510	774	4	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.103	0.104	-0.001	-0.962	0.103	0.102	0.103	0.100	17,922,000
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	7,899	2,271	6	0.289	0.289	0.286	0.287	0.290	-0.003	-1.034	0.287	0.287	0.309	0.100	15,785,000
OM0000001095	AL ANWAL CERAMIC	305,445	55,383	11	0.184	0.184	0.180	0.181	0.185	-0.003	-1.063	0.181	0.180	0.181	0.100	39,895,000
OM0000002200	ALBIL BANK	74,526	73,040	11	0.196	0.196	0.195	0.195	0.198	-0.003	-1.515	0.195	0.195	0.197	0.100	15,767,728
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	9,611	2,032	4	0.213	0.213	0.211	0.211	0.215	-0.004	-1.880	0.211	0.211	0.215	0.100	3,904,523
OM0000001301	DHOFAH FOODS AND INVESTMENT	1,660	342	2	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.206	0.000	-1.905	0.206	0.189	0.206	0.100	40,721,446
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	182,124	13,069	17	0.072	0.072	0.070	0.070	0.072	-0.002	-2.778	0.070	0.070	0.076	0.100	17,500,000
OM0000002911	FINANCIAL CORPORATION	13,862	1,463	6	0.105	0.109	0.105	0.107	0.116	-0.009	-7.758	0.107	0.105	0.107	0.100	7,493,206
OM0000001096	DHOFAH INSURANCE	2,500	845	1	0.338	0.338	0.338	0.338	0.337	-0.003	-8.895	0.338	0.338	0.380	0.100	39,326,634
Total		29	2,303,561	384,068	208											



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Donald Trump says US will win Iran war ‘peacefully or otherwise’

The US President also termed the blockade as “100% effective”

WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday again claimed that the Iranian military has been decimated and that the US is going to win the war “peacefully or otherwise.”

He made the remarks while speaking to reporters ahead of his departure to China.

When asked if he looks for an intervention by Chinese President Xi Jinping with the Iranians, Trump said, “No, I don’t think we need any help with Iran. We’ll win it one way or the other. We’ll win it peacefully or otherwise. Their Navy’s gone, their Air Force is gone, every single element of their war machine is gone.”

He added, responding to another question on Iran, saying that the country is defeated militarily and that, “They’ll either do the right thing or we’ll finish the job.”

The US President also termed the blockade as “100% effective”.

“The blockade is very effective; it’s been 100% effective. And one way or the other, it’s going to work out very well. I think you’re going



to have so much oil, you’re going to have a gusher of oil like you’ve never had before”, he told the media.

He also slammed NATO, calling it disappointing. “NATO was very disappointing to me. NATO was not there when we wanted them. We don’t need NATO. But if we did need them, they just weren’t there,” Trump said.

Meanwhile, NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte earlier expressed profound confidence in the long-term trajectory of the military alliance, though he acknowledged that the escalating crisis involving Iran is currently at the forefront of the global security agenda.

According to a report by Al Jazeera, the NATO Secretary General noted that immediate tactical concerns are centred on maritime security and regional stability.

The discussions come amidst heightened tensions in the Middle East, with NATO members weighing their roles in safeguarding vital trade corridors. As highlighted by Al Jazeera, the alliance is increasingly focused on the collective responsibility of its European members to manage regional flashpoints.

Despite these immediate geopolitical hurdles, Rutte remains bullish on the bloc’s internal health and financial commitment. “When

‘Lack of good faith, dishonesty by US an obstacle to end war’: Iranian FM Araghchi

TEHRAN: Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi on Tuesday slammed the United States and called the lack of faith in Washington’s actions the biggest impediment to peace, as reported by Press TV.

According to the Iranian state broadcaster, Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi made the remarks in talks with Norway’s deputy foreign minister during a meeting in Tehran.

Araghchi decried the arrogant approach and the threatening, provocative rhetoric of the American side and added that the “lack of good faith and dishonesty of the United States



is the most significant obstacle to a definitive end to the war.”

The Iranian Foreign Minister called the US and Israel’s military aggression against Iran the main cause and origin of the current situation in the Strait of Hormuz and subsequently, the repeated violation of the ceasefire through the continued blockade of Iran’s

maritime ports.

He said that Iran, as a coastal state of the Strait of Hormuz, is consulting and deliberating to formulate regulations regarding arrangements related to the Strait of Hormuz in accordance with international law.

As the situation continues to evolve in the region, UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan received a phone call from US President Donald Trump, during which the two sides discussed strategic cooperation and ways to strengthen UAE-US relations in support of mutual interests, as reported by the Emirates News Agency (WAM). -ANI

it comes to the more fundamental question of NATO’s future, I’m extremely optimistic,” he remarked, pointing towards the significant pledges made by European allies and Canada to bolster their defence spending.

This optimism is being tested

as the strategic Strait of Hormuz emerges as the central theatre of the escalating confrontation between the United States and Iran.

Dwindling tanker traffic indicates that Tehran may be tightening its grip on the vital maritime corridor, which remains in a state

of high alert.

The volatility follows Tehran’s near-complete shutdown of the trade route, a move triggered by joint Israeli-US airstrikes on 28 February and the subsequent retaliatory naval blockade enforced by the US last month. -ANI

SECURITY PACT

Pakistan’s Defence Minister signals broader defence agreement with Qatar, Turkiye after Saudi Arabia

ISLAMABAD : Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif has indicated the possibility of expanding the regional defence and economic arrangement with Qatar and Turkiye, suggesting that the framework could evolve into a broader security pact aimed at strengthening regional cooperation.

During an interview with Pakistani media outlet Hum News, Asif said discussions on the arrangement were at various stages of completion and could include these countries in the future.

Pakistan, last year, had already signed a “Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement” with Saudi Arabia, pledging that any aggression against either nation would be treated as an attack on both.

His recent remarks on Qatar and Turkiye joining Saudi Arabia and Pakistan under this pact signal the formation of an “Islamic NATO”, a concept that has been floated in recent times amid the



crisis in global regional security.

“The arrangement that has been finalised, or has been partially finalised, or is being finalised, is in process. This is an arrangement for the future, which obviously includes the present as

well,” Asif said.

“And if this already existing pact between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, if Qatar and Turkiye also join it, then it will be welcoming that such an economic and defence arrangement among countries

comes to our region here so that dependence on outside the region is minimised,” he added.

The Pakistani Defence Minister also emphasised that the proposed arrangement is not directed against any country but is aimed at enhancing regional stability and reducing external dependence.

“Dependence will remain in the world; there is a community, an international community in which all countries are linked economically and otherwise, but for peace in one’s own region, I think this pact is not against anyone, but it is very important to protect peace within our region,” he added.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia inked the defence pact during the state visit of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Riyadh at the invitation of Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

According to the joint statement issued following the visit,

“building on the historic partnership extending for nearly eight decades between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and based on the bonds of brotherhood and Islamic solidarity, as well as shared strategic interests and close defence cooperation between the two countries, HRH the Crown Prince and the Pakistani prime minister signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement.”

In a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) India, MEA Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated that New Delhi acknowledges the formalisation of what it described as a “long-standing arrangement” between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, while noting that it would closely examine its potential ramifications.

Jaiswal further emphasised that India’s national security remains paramount in light of this development. -Agencies

China urges Pakistan to step up Iran-US mediation

BEIJING: China has urged Pakistan to intensify its diplomatic mediation efforts in facilitating dialogue between Iran and the US, particularly amid critical discussions surrounding the stability in the Strait of Hormuz, according to the Chinese News Agency, Xinhua.

Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, conveyed the message during a phone conversation on Tuesday with Pakistani Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

During the call, Dar briefed Wang on Pakistan’s recent diplomatic engagement aimed at facilitating discussions between Tehran and Washington. He expressed gratitude for China’s support and said Pakistan hopes to strengthen coordination with Beijing to play a constructive role in stability. -ANI

FRESH FIGHTING

Sport helping displaced Lebanese living in stadium to cope

BEIRUT: Hassan Seif al-Din never expected that, at the age of 65, he would be teaching martial arts to children in a football stadium in Beirut. But these are not normal times.

The coach fled to Camille Chamoun Sports City Stadium from Dahiyeh, one of the capital’s southern suburbs, along with thousands of others. He now lives in one of the many rows of tents set up in the venue.

The Middle East was plunged into fresh fighting on February 28 when the United States and Israel attacked Iran and the conflict spread into Lebanon just days later.

In April, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the United Nations said that more than a million people in Lebanon had been displaced as Israel has bombed Hezbollah targets in the country. Hassan is just one of them.

Hassan Seif al-Din, Lebanese refugee and martial arts coach Hassan Seif al-Din, Lebanese refugee and martial arts coach

Hassan Seif al-Din was forced to flee from a southern Beirut suburb. Image: Sara Hteit/DW

“There was so much bombing around us, so we escaped and ended up displaced here at the Sports City,” Hassan told DW.

After he arrived, he was determined to maintain his martial arts routine.



“I was training here on my own for two to three hours a day,” he said.

As he did so, he noticed children around watching him.

“I thought to myself, ‘let me bring them together, train them, and bring some joy into their lives through this sport, help them forget what’s happening in the city, teach them how to switch off for a while and build their strength — physically and mentally.’”

Adnan is one of the children who has been learning a new skill.

“I really love how the coach teaches us, especially how to defend myself and build confidence,” he told DW. “If someone attacked me in the street and tried to kidnap me, I’d know how

to defend myself.”

Sports as a distraction

There’s more to it than self-defense for Hassan. It is about giving young people something else to think about than bombs, the homes they are missing and their normal lives. It is about giving them something to look forward to.

“The displaced people living in the tents carry their own trauma,” he said.

“(During training) they’re away from everything happening outside, enjoying being together and training with me. Having a coach and a team is something they never had before, so they take to it naturally. They’ve become like family.

“It means so much to them to

forget the pain and everything happening outside this pitch. They’re happy. Sometimes they will come and wake me up saying, ‘Let’s go, coach, time to train.’”

Football clubs chip in with support

The stadium has long been the home of the Lebanon national team and the venue has witnessed some of the country’s greatest sporting moments, such as a famous win over South Korea in 2011 during World Cup qualification. Older residents still talk of 1975, when Pele played a friendly there in front of more than 35,000 fans.

The stadium reflects the country’s troubled history to an extent.

It was destroyed during the Israeli invasion of 1982 and rebuilt in 1990 after the 15-year-long civil war ended. In 2024, it hosted Hassan Nasrallah’s funeral after the Hezbollah leader was killed in an Israeli strike.

Football is the country’s most popular sport and clubs have been working hard to help those in need.

“I am happy that the stadium is able to shelter people,” Wael Chehayeb, a member of the Executive Committee of the Lebanon Football Association, told DW. “It’s also sad that this, a place that usually brings joy and pulls people out of their stressful lives to come and watch games, has to be used like this.”

Some of the country’s football clubs have been busy helping out.

“Players and officials at second-division club Akhaa have volunteered at public schools where some displaced families were sheltered,” Chehayeb said.

“Clubs such as Safa and Nejmeh sheltered some families at their stadiums and provided food. Other clubs like Ansar helped with food parcels.”

Despite being unable to use dressing rooms and other facilities, some players are still training as clubs feel that players being around and interacting with the families helps lift spirits.

‘A sense of solidarity’

Anything that makes life in the

stadium easier is welcome for its temporary residents, such as the family of Howaida Amin Mzannar, who fled from Aitaroun, a village in southern Lebanon. It had become so dangerous that the family, which has been forced to flee in the past, was unable to bring any of its possessions.

“We have been suffering from the situation on the border for a long time,” Mzannar told DW. “Now we are here, but it is so difficult, not knowing where you will be tomorrow. There is the psychological pressure due to the uncertainty of the future.”

The only comfort to be found comes from their new and sudden neighbors.

“There is a sense of solidarity among people; everyone is helping each other” Mzannar said.

“Life is simple and follows a daily routine: cleaning, organizing, sitting together and the children are trying to create a sense of normal life.”

Hassan plans to continue helping in that regard.

“I never imagined I’d be displaced one day and become a coach at the same time. It’s God’s will — a coincidence that led me here,” he said.

“I’m truly happy here. Believe it or not, I feel like I want to stay here and train them for a year, two or three. In a year and a half, I could make national champions out of them.” -DW



SCIENTISTS

THE DISCOVERY SUGGESTS

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THAT THE PROTEIN MAY INFLUENCE

THAT LINKS DNA

BOTH BRAIN DISEASES AND CANCER,

REPAIR TO CANCER

POTENTIALLY RESHAPING HOW SCIENTISTS

AND DEMENTIA:

THINK ABOUT THESE MAJOR

STUDY

HEALTH CONDITIONS



Researchers at Houston Methodist have discovered that a protein tied to neurodegenerative conditions such as dementia and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) also helps control a critical DNA repair process, according to a press release issued by ScienceDaily.

This repair system, known as DNA mismatch repair, corrects mistakes that occur when cells copy genetic material.

The discovery suggests that the protein may influence both brain diseases and cancer, potentially reshaping how scientists think about these major health conditions.

The study, published in Nucleic Acids Research, shows that the protein ‘TDP43’ regulates genes responsible for fixing DNA errors.

According to the release, when levels of this protein drop too low or rise too high, those repair genes become overly active. Instead of protecting cells, the heightened repair activity can harm neurons and destabilise the genome, which may increase the risk of cancer.

“DNA repair is one of the most fundamental processes in biology,” said lead investigator Muralidhar L Hegde, PhD, professor of neurosurgery at the Houston Methodist Research Institute’s Centre for Neuroregeneration.

“What we found is that TDP43 is not just another RNA-binding protein involved in splicing, but a critical regulator of mismatch repair machinery. That has major implications for diseases like ALS and frontotemporal dementia (FTD) where this protein goes awry,” added Hegde.

The researchers also uncovered evidence linking the protein to cancer. By analysing large cancer databases, the team found that higher amounts of TDP43 were associated with greater numbers of mutations in tumours.

“This tells us that the biology of this protein is broader than just ALS or FTD,” Hegde said. “In cancers, this protein appears to be up-regulated and linked to increased mutation load. That puts it at the intersection of two of the most important disease categories of our time: neurodegeneration and cancer,” added Hegde, as per the release.

The scientists say the findings may also point toward new treatment approaches. In laboratory models, reducing the excessive DNA repair activity caused by abnormal TDP43 helped partially reverse cellular damage.

Hegde said that controlling DNA mismatch repair may offer a therapeutic strategy. -ANI

Oman crack world top 10 in beach soccer rankings



Under coach Talib Hilal Oman have achieved their highest-ever official position

Ashok Purohit

MUSCAT: Oman's national beach soccer team have broken into the world's top 10 for the first time in the latest Beach Soccer Worldwide (BSWW) rankings released last week, marking another milestone in the Sultanate's steady rise as a global force in the sport.

Ranked 10th in the world, Oman have achieved their highest-ever official position in the BSWW rankings, underlining years of consistent performances at FIFA Beach Soccer World Cups and continental competitions.

The rise has also been boosted by Oman's recent silver medal at the Asian Beach Games in Sanya, China, adding to a strong conti-

mental record under long-serving head coach Talib Hilal. For Talib, who has been at the helm since 2008, the achievement is both a reward and motivation.

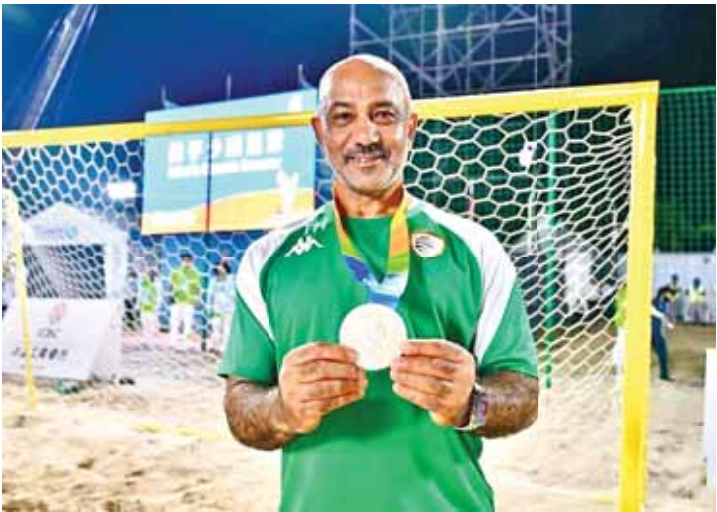
"I am incredibly happy that we are among the top 10 teams in the world.

"Undoubtedly, it is a big achievement, and I am proud of my boys and the support of the Oman Football Association and the sports ministry," he said.

A former Oman international and Fanja Club star, Talib remains ambitious despite the milestone.

"My aim is to lead Oman to be among the top five teams in the world in future," he added.

The veteran coach, one of the most influential figures in Oman's



beach soccer journey, also highlighted the significance of the recent Asian Beach Games campaign. "I am also happy to have led the boys to a silver medal at the Asian Beach Games recently," Talib said.

"I have the credit for leading the team to a gold medal at the inaugural Asian Beach Games in 2008,

World rankings

Oman's rise in the world rankings has been gradual but steady. The team were ranked 18th in July 2022, improved to 14th in April 2023, slipped to 16th in July 2024, entered the top 12 in June 2025 and moved up to 11th in January 2026 before breaking into the top 10 in the latest update last week.

The latest jump places Oman among beach soccer's elite nations.

Within Asia, Oman are now ranked third, behind Iran (world No.6) and Japan (No.8), reflecting the depth of competition in the AFC region.

Brazil (4085.25 points) continue to dominate the rankings at the top, followed by Portugal (2978.25) and Russia in joint second, then Italy (2906), Belarus (2802.25) and Spain (2002). Iran are the highest-ranked Asian team in sixth with 1958 points, followed by Senegal (1575.75) and Japan (1509).

Paraguay (1255.25) sit just above Oman, who with 1192 points complete the world's top 10.

The Sultanate's ascent has been

shaped by strong performances at FIFA Beach Soccer World Cups, where Oman have qualified six times — in 2011, 2015, 2019, 2021, 2024 and 2025. Their standout campaign remains 2015, when they won the AFC Asian Beach Soccer Championship and achieved a special ranking high of eighth in August that year — a non-official peak during one of their most successful periods. That campaign is widely regarded as Oman's golden era. They defeated continental heavyweights Iran and Japan en route to their maiden Asian title before finishing ninth at the World Cup in Portugal after a tough group featuring Italy, Switzerland and Costa Rica.

More recently, Oman reinforced their status with a notable victory over Japan in the 2025 Asian Cup semifinals, underlining their consistency among Asia's elite. With momentum building again after the Asian Beach Games silver and a return to the world's top 10, Talib's long-term ambition of taking Oman into the top five now stands as the next frontier for the "Beach Red Warriors."

LORD'S TEST



Gay, Rew, Robinson in England's first Test squad vs New Zealand

LONDON: England have ended Ollie Robinson's two-year international exile and called up uncapped trio Emilio Gay, James Rew and Sonny Baker for the first Test since the dismal Ashes campaign. Sussex seamer Robinson, 32, returns after being dropped in 2024 as England look for an attack leader to take on New Zealand at Lord's from 4 June.

As expected, opener Zak Crawley pays the price for his disappointing tour of Australia - which ended in a 4-1 England defeat - and is left out for the first time since captain Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum took charge of the Test team in 2022.

Crawley's place in the XI is like-

ly to go to Durham 26-year-old Gay, who has the advantage over fellow left-hander Rew, 22, by virtue of being a specialist opener.

Shoaib Bashir is named in the squad despite being ignored for the entire Ashes series and will vie for the spinner's spot with Rehan Ahmed. Leg-spinner Ahmed could play in a home Test for the first time.

England have also confirmed the appointment of Australian Marcus North as the new national selector. The Durham director of cricket replaces Luke Wright, who stepped down for personal reasons after the Ashes, and becomes the first foreigner to chair England's selection panel.

The greatest intrigue from North's first squad is provided by the recall of Robinson in a pace-bowling department in need of rebuilding after the retirements of Stuart Broad, James Anderson and Chris Woakes in successive years. Robinson has a hugely impressive Test record, with 76 wickets at an average below 23 from his 20 matches.

England squad for first Test against New Zealand: Ben Stokes, Rehan Ahmed, Gus Atkinson, Sonny Baker, Shoaib Bashir, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Ben Duckett, Matthew Fisher, Emilio Gay, James Rew, Ollie Robinson, Joe Root, Jamie Smith, Josh Tongue. - Agencies

ITALIAN OPEN

Sinner matches Djokovic record

ROME: Jannik Sinner beat qualifier Andrea Pellegrino 6-2, 6-3 to reach the Italian Open quarter-finals on Tuesday, matching Novak Djokovic's record with a 31st consecutive Masters Series victory.

Sinner hasn't lost a Masters Series event — the biggest tournaments outside the Grand Slams — since he retired with cramps in extreme heat against Tallon Griekspoor in Shanghai in October.

Djokovic won 31 straight Masters matches in 2011.

"If you want to be a great player you've got to play on all the surfaces and all the tournaments at your maximum," Sinner said.

"It's the mind that makes the difference."

If Sinner raises the trophy in Rome, he'll become the second man after Djokovic to triumph at all nine Masters 1000 events. Djokovic has won each event at least twice.

"It's time to take the title away from Adriano," read a sign that one fan held aloft at the Foro Italico, referring to the last Italian man to win the singles title in Rome: Adriano Panatta 50 years ago.

Panatta will present the winner's trophy after Sunday's title match. Overall, Sinner extended his winning streak to 26 matches.



He hasn't lost since getting beat by Jakub Mensik in the Qatar Open quarter-finals on February 19.

Meanwhile Alexander Zverev suffered a shock exit at the hands of another local hero in Luciano Darderi. Second seed Zverev fell 1-6, 7-6 (12/10), 6-0, the German collapsing to defeat in front of a passionate crowd that roared on 18th-seeded Italian Darderi.

While Sinner and Darderi — set to rise to a career-high 17th in the world — reached the last eight, their compatriot Lorenzo Musetti was not so fortunate as physical problems led to him being beaten 6-3, 6-1 by Casper Ruud.

Norwegian Ruud is on the other side of the draw from Sinner and

will face Karen Khachanov in the last eight after exploiting Musetti's struggles with fitness.

Khachanov, seeded 13th, ended Dino Prizmic's bid to reach his first Masters 1000 quarter-final, seeing off the spirited Croatian qualifier 6-1, 7-6 (7/2).

Cirstea in semi-finals

Veteran Sorana Cirstea, who knocked out world No.1 Aryna Sabalenka in the third round, reached the semifinals of the women's tournament after beating Jelena Ostapenko 6-1, 7-6 (7/0). The Romanian will face Coco Gauff in the last four, after the American overcame Russian teenager Mirra Andreeva 4-6, 6-2, 6-4. - Agencies

FORMER DJOKOVIC COACH

Andy Murray to coach Britain's Draper in build-up to Wimbledon

LONDON: Former Wimbledon champion Andy Murray is to return to coaching with Britain's Jack Draper during the grass-court season, it was announced Tuesday.

Murray had a six-month spell coaching former rival Novak Djokovic between November 2024 and last May, but has since spent time away from tennis.

But he has now returned to work with Draper, who looks the most likely of Britain's current male tennis players to succeed two-

time Wimbledon king Murray as a Grand Slam champion.

Draper announced on Tuesday that he had split from coach Jamie Delgado, who himself had worked with Murray when the 38-year-old Scot was a player.

"I am very grateful for everything Jamie Delgado has done for me over these past six months," said Draper.

"He is a world-class coach and a great man. In the interim, I will continue to be supported by the excellent team at the LTA (Lawn



Tennis Association), with the addition of Andy Murray, who will be supporting me throughout the grass-court season," he added.

Draper was in the top four of the world rankings last June.

But the 24-year-old has since slid down the standings, spending nearly eight months sidelined by an arm problem, and in April, he announced he had been ruled out of the upcoming French Open because of a knee problem.

The left-hander played just four tournaments under Delgado, with

his best result a run to the quarter-finals of Indian Wells in March as defending champion, which included a victory over Djokovic.

Draper, however, has managed just nine matches across five events since returning in February and retired during his first-round clash with Tomas Etcheverry at the Barcelona Open last month.

While he won his first ATP Tour title in Stuttgart two years ago, Draper has never made it beyond the second round on home soil at Wimbledon. - Agencies

HOUSTON MARATHON WINNER

Ethiopian marathon runner Melese dies aged 36



ADDIS ABABA: Ethiopian long-distance runner Yebrgual Melese has died at the age of 36 after falling ill during a routine training session on Tuesday, the country's athletics federation has announced.

Melese, the winner of marathons in Houston, Prague and Shanghai, had been preparing for a race in Ottawa on 24 May.

According to local media reports, she experienced a sudden medical emergency in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa.

She was rushed to hospital but died despite the efforts of medical staff.

No further details have been made public.

"The Ethiopian Athletics Federation expresses its deep sorrow over the sudden passing of this heroic athlete and offers condolences to her family, friends and fans," the governing body said in a statement.

Melese's most recent competitive outing came in a marathon in Beijing, which she failed to finish, in May last year. Her best result in one of the seven World Marathon Majors came in 2015 - the same year as her victories in Houston and Prague - when she finished second in the Chicago Marathon.

CHAMPIONSHIP PLAYOFF



Southampton to take on Hull for a place in the Premier League

LONDON: Southampton will play Hull City for a place in the Premier League after coming back from a goal down to beat Middlesbrough 2-1 in extra-time of a gruelling Championship playoff semi-final second leg on Tuesday.

Shea Charles fired the Saints on their way to Wembley with a curled left-footed shot that bounced in off the inside of the post in the 116th minute after the 90 minutes ended 1-1.

Hull beat Millwall 2-0 in the other playoff semi-final in London on Monday.

The final, dubbed the "richest game in football" because of the huge financial rewards of playing in the top flight, will be played at Wembley on May 23.

After a goalless first leg and still deadlocked in the second, the sides headed into extra-time still with everything to play for and Southampton's St. Mary's stadium crackling with tension.

Riley McGree stunned the home crowd when he fired Middlesbrough ahead after five minutes with a side-footed shot low into the corner. Ross Stewart missed a good chance to equalise seven minutes later but the Scot made up for the miss with a header just before the break after goalkeeper Sol Brynna parried a Ryan Manning effort.

Tempers flared on the touchline before that with Middlesbrough manager Kim Hellberg and Southampton's Tonda Eckert having to be physically separated as referee Andy Madley had a word. Sky Sports television said Boro defender Luke Ayling had earlier reported Southampton's Taylor Harwood-Bellis to Madley for using "discriminatory language".

Emotions were already running high after Middlesbrough accused Southampton, which was relegated from the top flight in 2025, of spying on its training before the first leg at the Riverside Stadium.

Southampton, who finished the season fourth in the standings with Middlesbrough fifth, was charged by the English Football League on Friday with an independent disciplinary commission hearing still pending. - Agencies

‘Brazil must turn World Cup pressure into motivation’

Team manager Carlo Ancelotti believes ‘the most resilient team will win the 2026 World Cup’



RIO DE JANEIRO: Less than a month before the World Cup begins, coach Carlo Ancelotti said Brazil must learn to turn pressure into fuel as the record five-time champions tries to end a 24-year wait to lift the trophy again.

"What I've noticed this year, to be honest, is that there's a lot of pressure; there's a lot of pressure on the players," the Italian manager told in an interview at the Brazilian FA's headquarters in Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday.

"What I think is that the players also put a lot of pressure on themselves, sometimes too much. So, the pressure and worry outweigh the joy, the energy that the Brazilians have, the creativity that the Brazilians have."

Brazil's recent World Cup exits have often been picked over as much for emotional fragility as for tactical flaws, and Ancelotti said he had seen signs of that burden even in friendlies.

"I've seen it in some friendlies... a mistake by a team-mate in a friendly match seems like a tragedy," he said.

"We need to establish a routine to avoid all this, because pressure is obviously a very important factor. Managing pressure well means having more motivation and more camaraderie, because you can share the pressure. Then it weighs less heavily on you."

For Ancelotti, the answer is not to drain Brazil of their identity but to give it a frame sturdy enough to survive modern football's intensity. The old question of whether



Brazil should entertain or simply win is not one he accepts as a choice.

"What Brazilian players and Brazilian football must not lose is their greatest quality: creativity, joy and energy," he said.

Ancelotti said he found the clearest version of what he wants from Brazil not on a pitch, but at Carnival.

"It was my first Carnival here this year," he said. "I noticed a lot of joy, a lot of energy, because people were dancing until the sun came up, but also a great deal of commitment from everyone in a popular festival that everyone feels part of."

"If you go to watch the parade

However, Ancelotti said Brazil had been slower than some nations to adapt to a game increasingly shaped by intensity, structure and collective work.

"Brazil have the same qualities as always but you have to support that creativity with organisation, commitment and attitude," he said.

"Talent is important, but to beat talent, you need organisation. And yes, we're going to make it happen because you can teach organisation, but you can't teach talent."

Ancelotti also offered his own definition of "jogo bonito".

"It can be a piece of skill, it can also be teamwork, a collective commitment, a spectacular team attitude when in possession, and everyone working hard," he said.

Brazil may not arrive as favourite, but Ancelotti said he was comfortable with that.

"I like it," he said of Brazil being viewed as a dark horse. "I think it's a World Cup where there isn't a clear favourite because every team has its problems."

"There is no perfect team. I believe the most resilient team will win the World Cup."

And if Brazil wants to recover any status it may have surrendered, Ancelotti has the answer: "There is only one way to regain hierarchy in football, and that is to win the World Cup." - Agencies

INTER MIAMI STAR



LONDON: Lionel Messi remains the highest-paid player in Major League Soccer with an annual base salary of \$25m (£18.5m) - more than double that of the North American league's next-highest earner.

Figures released, external by the MLS Players Association reflect the contract extension that Messi, who turns 39 next month, signed with Inter Miami in October. The Argentina forward's base salary has doubled, while overall the deal is worth \$28.3m (£20.9m) in guaranteed compensation. LAFC's Son Heung-min is the second-highest earner on a base of \$10.4m (£7.7m), with \$11.2m (£8.3m) guaranteed.

The former Tottenham forward, 33, earns slightly more than Inter Miami's Rodrigo de Paul and San Diego FC's Hirving Lozano. The salaries do not include income from endorsement deals, or Messi's option to acquire a stake in Inter Miami - co-owned by David Beckham. Messi joined the Florida franchise in 2023 and has scored 59 goals in 64 regular-season MLS games, helping Miami win the MLS Cup in 2025.

He led the league with 29 goals last season and has been Most Valuable Player in each of the two full MLS seasons he has played so far - 2024 and 2025. - Agencies

SEPTEMBER 19-OCTOBER 4

Cricket bowls over baseball-mad Japan ahead of Asian Games 2026

TOKYO: Curious spectators clutching rulebooks watch as a batter smacks a six into the sand and weeds surrounding Japan's brand-new cricket ground, four months before it hosts matches at the Asian Games.

Japanese fans will be familiar with many of the events at the Olympic-like multi-sport competition when it is held in Nagoya from September 19 to October 4, but most are likely to be stumped by cricket.

That won't stop them from taking an interest though, and now they have a purpose-built ground to welcome star teams such as India and Pakistan.

Korogi Sports Park, a converted baseball field that still has a pitcher's mound just beyond the boundary, is about a 40-minute train ride from central Nagoya.

It is currently warming up for the Asian Games by hosting its first cricket event, the East Asia-Pacific qualifiers for the 2028 men's T20 World Cup.

The qualifiers feature Japan and fellow cricket minnows Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, Indonesia, the Phil-

ippines, Papua New Guinea, the Cook Islands and South Korea.

About 300 people turned up to watch Japan's opening game on a windy weekend morning, most sitting on deck chairs within earshot of a commentator guiding them through the basics of the game.

Temporary stands will be in place at the Asian Games, taking the capacity up to around 2,000.

While the continent's star players may be used to grand surroundings, they are unlikely to be disappointed by the quality of the pitch. That is the responsibility of Asitha Wijayasinghe, who also curates the pitch at the 35,000-capacity Pallekele International Cricket Stadium in Sri Lanka.

Adam Birss, Korogi Sports Park's Asian Games operations manager, says the pitch is likely to be "bouncy", despite typhoon season usually arriving in Japan in September. "I would say that it should act like the pitches in Pakistan, which are bouncy but also take spin," he said. "It's got a grippy surface, so if you put spin on the ball, it will spin off."

Korogi Sports Park is part of an



ambitious strategy to popularise cricket in baseball-mad Japan, which world governing body the ICC sees as one of its "priority countries".

Playing numbers are on the rise, and the Japan Cricket Association (JCA) has had some success in

carving out a tentative foothold for the sport in and around Tokyo.

Cricket's inclusion in the Asian Games was only confirmed in April last year, and the JCA argued unsuccessfully that it should be played in Sano, a hotbed for the sport about 100km

ideal situation, but not when you're talking with 15 months' preparation," he said.

Miyaji is also concerned about the long-term future of Korogi Sports Park, which will be shared with baseball teams when the Asian Games are over.

The question of who maintains the pitch is another unresolved issue, but Miyaji hopes the venue can be "one of the key ingredients of the growth of cricket in Japan".

The local mayor has been an enthusiastic supporter, and there is certainly interest among those who venture along to watch Japan's game against Vanuatu. The Japanese players do their bit, beating their opponents by 30 runs.

With only four months to go until the Asian Games begin, Japan's players are hoping the buzz continues.

"The ground looks in incredible condition given that they only started building it a few months ago," said Japan captain Kendel Kadowaki-Fleming.

"Excitement is the overwhelming emotion that we're feeling about it." - Agencies

ROUND-UP

Kia Seltos named ‘SUV of the Year’ at 2026 Times Drive Auto Summit & Awards in India

The all-new Kia Seltos was selected by a panel of automotive journalists and media experts, based on comprehensive evaluation criteria including design, performance, technology, safety and sustainability

MUSCAT: The all-new Kia Seltos has been named ‘SUV of the Year’ at the 2026 Times Drive Auto Summit & Awards in New Delhi, India, underscoring the model’s continued success in one of the world’s most dynamic and competitive automotive markets. Organised by Times Drive, a key automotive and mobility platform under Times Group, India’s largest media conglomerate, the awards recognise outstanding vehicles across the industry.

The all-new Kia Seltos was selected by a panel of automotive journalists and media experts, based on comprehensive evaluation criteria including Design, Performance, Technology, Safety and Sustainability. This latest recognition highlights the all-new Seltos’s strong customer appeal in India’s highly competitive B-SUV segment, while reinforcing Kia’s growing brand appeal and leader-



ship in the global SUV market.

Continued commitment

“This recognition for the Kia Seltos reflects our continued commitment to delivering vehicles that combine design, technology and practicality in ways that resonate with our customers across diverse markets. As a core model in Kia’s

global SUV lineup, Seltos plays a key role in strengthening our presence in strategic regions such as India. Accolades such as the 2026 Times Drive Auto Summit & Awards ‘SUV of the Year’ highlight the importance of delivering design-led, safety-focused, customer-centric mobility solutions that offer both everyday usability

and long-term value,” said Ho Sung Song, President and CEO of Kia Corporation. The Seltos’s recognition reflects its broad range of capabilities and customer-focused features, combining authentic SUV design, advanced connectivity and practical versatility tailored to a wide range of user needs.

“The Seltos was developed

with a clear intent from the very beginning – to understand Indian customers and build around their needs. With this new generation, we have taken that forward by making it more spacious, more confident in its design, stronger in safety and technology, and more aligned with how families use their vehicles. This recognition reflects

the strength of that approach and the strong connect the Seltos continues to build with our customers,” said Gwanggu Lee, Managing Director and CEO of Kia India.

Reliable International Automotive (RIA), the official distributor of Kia in Oman, is committed to delivering an exceptional ownership experience.

MALABAR GOLD & DIAMONDS

India’s gold duty hike creates major opportunity for GCC jewellery market

MUSCAT: India’s decision to raise import duties on gold and silver from 6% to 15% creates a significant price gap.

Customers can now expect gold and jewellery in the GCC, to be approximately 12% more affordable compared to Indian markets. With gold prices at or near all-time highs globally, the impact of the duty hike is amplified. The absolute monetary savings on each purchase are larger than ever, making it the most compelling time in recent memory to buy gold in the GCC rather than India.

India’s Union Budget, effective February 2026, revised the duty-free import limit for NRIs travelling back to India. Women can now carry up to 40 grams and men up to 20 grams of gold jewellery, duty-free.

As higher import duties make it increasingly difficult to bring international jewellery into India, consumers there will find themselves largely limited to locally produced designs.

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, with its extensive global sourcing network, offers customers in the GCC access to over 200,000 jewellery designs from over 20 countries, including Italy, Turkey, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and China, spanning traditional craftsmanship, contemporary styles, and global fusion aesthetics.

In the GCC, gold purity and quality are actively monitored and regulated by the government, giving shoppers complete confidence and transparency in every purchase. Making charges across the GCC are also generally lower than in many other markets, adding further to the overall value proposition.

Shoppers at Malabar Gold & Diamonds benefit from the added assurance of lifetime jewellery



maintenance across all global outlets and a guaranteed buyback policy, ensuring that every purchase is not just a buying decision but a sound, long-term investment.

The increased footfall and purchasing intent driven by this price differential is expected to give a strong uplift to the jewellery retail sector across the GCC, reinforcing the region’s position as the world’s premier gold shopping destination.

Shamlal Ahamed, MD-International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds said: “India’s decision to increase gold import duties to 15% marks a significant moment for the GCC jewellery market. For smart NRIs, tourists, and savvy investors, the message is clear - there has never been a better time to buy gold and jewellery across the GCC.

“The price advantage of 12% compared to India is not a marginal difference; it is a transformational one. The recently revised duty-free allowance is a further incentive. A family of four travelling back to India

can now collectively carry up to 140 grams of gold jewellery duty-free, and with NRI wedding season approaching in July and August, residents can enjoy massive savings by purchasing gold from the region.

“What also sets the GCC apart is the sheer variety on offer. With jewellery sourced from over 20 countries, shoppers here have access to over 200,000 designs to choose from. With the respective government ensuring strict gold purity standards, and the GCC offering some of the lowest making charges worldwide, customers already enjoy a major advantage. Add to that Malabar Gold & Diamonds’ lifetime jewellery maintenance and guaranteed global buy-back, and it’s clear that there has never been a better time to buy gold in the GCC.

“At Malabar Gold & Diamonds, we are fully prepared to welcome this new wave of discerning shoppers and offer them the quality, variety, and value that only a world-class jewellery destination can deliver.”

SECOND EDITION

Bank Muscat supports Sultan Qaboos University’s student graduation projects exhibition

MUSCAT: Reaffirming its commitment to supporting Omani youth and promoting innovation and scientific research, Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, extended its support to the second edition of the Student Graduation Projects Exhibition organised by Sultan Qaboos University (SQU).

The initiative reflects the bank’s continued efforts to strengthen cooperation with educational institutions and contribute to developing the skills and capabilities of young Omanis.

In recognition of the bank’s support for the exhibition, Her Highness Sayyida Dr. Mona Fahad Al Said, Assistant Vice-Chancellor for International Cooperation at Sultan Qaboos University and patron of the event, honoured Bank Muscat for its contribution to the success of the exhibition.

The honour was received by Salim Mohammed Al Kaabi, General Manager Credit and Legal, on behalf of the Bank.

Held on 12 and 13 May at the Conference and Exhibition Hall at Sultan Qaboos University, the exhibition brought together university officials, guests and students presenting a range of graduation projects and research initiatives. The exhibition served as an important platform for students to showcase their innovative ideas and engage with visitors, helping bridge academic outcomes with labour market requirements.

Speaking on the occasion, Salim Mohammed Al Kaabi, General Manager Credit and Legal at Bank Muscat, said: “Bank Muscat is committed to supporting initiatives that contribute to developing the capabilities of Omani youth and encouraging innovation and creativity. Our partnership with Sultan Qaboos University reflects the importance of collaboration between the private sector and



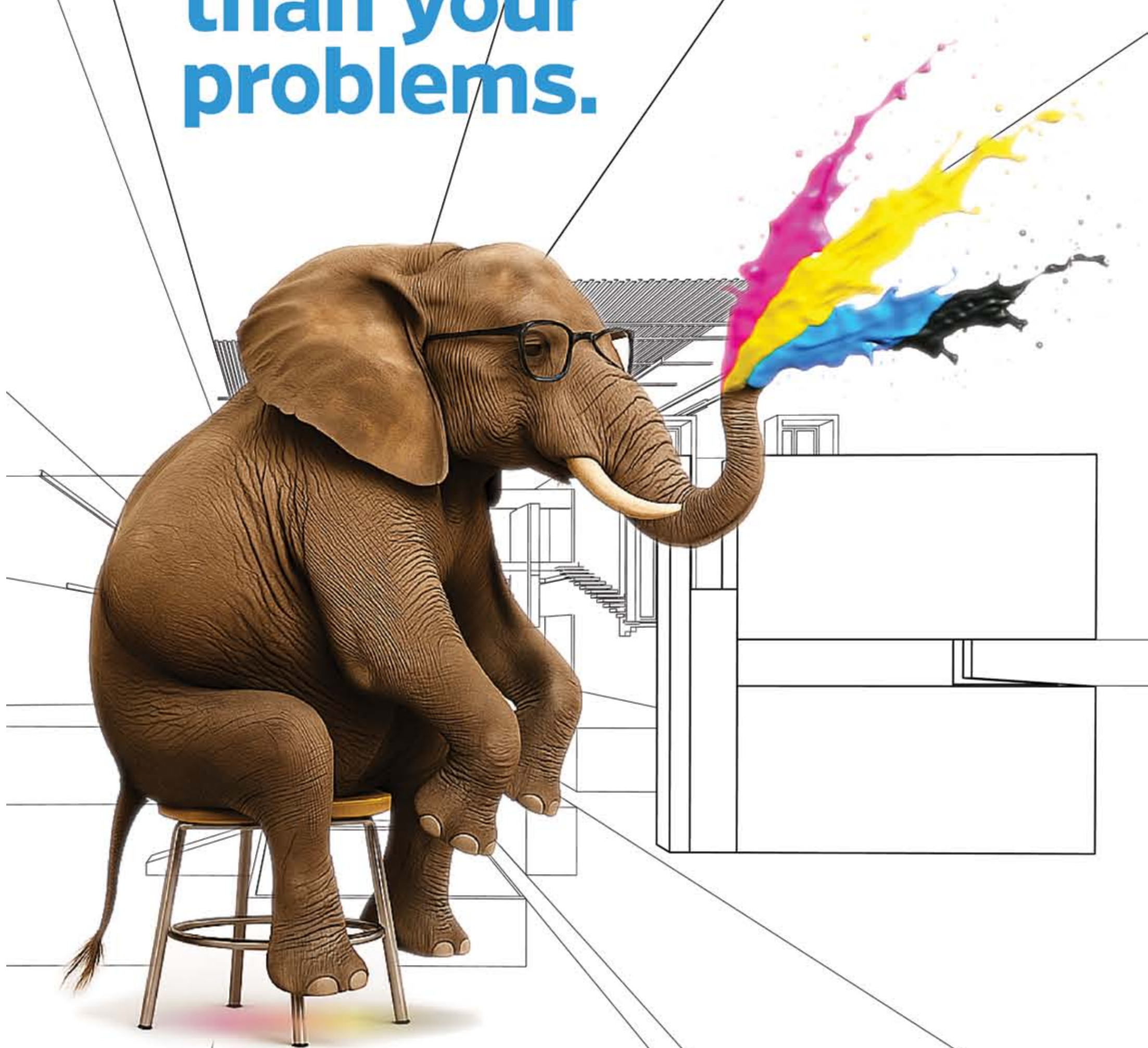
academic institutions in supporting sustainable development and preparing future generations to contribute to Oman’s economic growth and diversification. We are proud to support programmes that invest in human capital and create opportunities for students to showcase their talents and achievements.”

As part of its corporate social responsibility vision, Bank Muscat continues to support initiatives focused on education, youth development and scientific research, recognising their importance in achieving sustainable development goals. The Bank regularly participates in events and activi-

ties organised by educational institutions, including the annual Career Fair hosted by the Career Guidance Centre at Sultan Qaboos University, graduation ceremonies and various career exhibitions.

Bank Muscat was also among the first financial institutions to establish a branch at the Sultan Qaboos University campus, in addition to a dedicated Meethaq Islamic Banking branch. The branches provide a comprehensive range of banking services and facilities for students, academic staff and employees, supported by ATMs and CDMs operating round the clock to ensure convenient and seamless banking services for customers.

We make your Business bigger than your problems.



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- Event conceptualisation
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- Large format digital printing
- Flex banners
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- Back drops with metal frames
- Wooden standalones
- Backlit flex banners