



New association to boost Oman's maritime sector

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In a move to advance Oman's maritime sector, H E Dr Laila bint Ahmed al Najjar, Minister of Social Development, has issued Ministerial Decision No 80/2025 to establish Oman Maritime Association. Issued on February 19, 2025 the decision will take effect following its publication in the Official Gazette.

The association aims to improve collaboration, develop expertise and promote sustainable growth in the maritime industry. It will work closely with government agencies while providing advisory services to stakeholders. A key objective is to increase youth participation, ensuring the sector's long-term development.

Among its initiatives, the association will promote specialised training, professional development and industry awareness. It plans to support young Omanis in entering the maritime sector, fostering future leadership in the field.

Oman Maritime Association is a much-needed development for both Omani youth and the wider maritime community

KHALID AL AMRI

A governing board of five to 12 members will oversee operations, with members elected for two-year terms. They may serve up to two consecutive terms before a mandatory break. Funding will come from member subscriptions, event revenues and

approved donations. Industry experts welcomed the initiative. Nasser al Hosni, an economic analyst, said, "Establishment of Oman Maritime Association marks a milestone for the country's maritime sector. Partnership between govern-

the industry, strengthening Oman's maritime workforce for the future."

Maritime expert Khalid al Amri echoed Hosni's views. "Having spent most of my life working on Oman's waters, I can confidently say that Oman Maritime Association is a much-needed development for both Omani youth and the wider maritime community."

He added that the association will provide essential support, such as training programmes and more effective policies to protect livelihoods involving maritime activities.

"I'm particularly looking forward to seeing initiatives aimed at improving environmental preservation and safety standards at sea," Amri said.

100 jobs to be created in semiconductor industry

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Labour, in collaboration with Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, has signed a co-operation programme with Global Semiconductor Micro-electronics Company (GSME) Oman to enhance capabilities of Omani nationals in the technology sector.

The partnership, which aims to fill critical technical and administrative roles within the semiconductor and technology industries, was formalised with the signing of an agreement by H E Salem bin Muslim bin Ali al Bussaidi, Undersecretary for Human Resources Development in Ministry of Labour, and Farhat Ja-



hangir, CEO of GSME Oman. In line with Oman Vision 2040, the programme will focus on developing skills needed for semiconductor applications and solutions, with the aim of creating 100 job opportunities in the sector. The initial phase of the programme will provide 50 positions at GSME Oman, with the

possibility of additional roles to be offered by other private companies in the sector. The programme also seeks to promote private sector recruitment of Omani jobseekers, ensuring that the national workforce is equipped with the skills needed to succeed in the competitive technology landscape.

No new seafood retail licences for one year

Our Correspondent
Muscat

H E Saud bin Hamoud al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, has issued Ministerial Decision No 41/2025 aimed at regulating retail sale of seafood and related products.

The decision puts on hold new applications for licences to engage in selling seafood for one year. According to Article 1

of the decision, the suspension applies to all licensing applications for retail seafood stores.

This temporary pause is part of wider efforts to ensure sustainability and protection of Oman's marine resources, furthering the sultanate's commitment to responsible fishing practices.

The decision was issued on February 24 and will be effective following its publication in the Official Gazette.

In alignment with the Aquatic Living Resources Law established by Royal Decree 20/2019 and its amendments under Royal Decree No 92/2020, the decision emphasises the government's focus on public interest and sustainable management of marine resources. The decision also abides by executive regulations of Ministerial Decision No 4/94 concerning protection of living aquatic resources.

A Decade of Innovation and Excellence:

AL Misfat Equipment Company Celebrates 10 Years of SANY Dealership Leadership, Advancing Oman's Heavy Equipment Industry

Author: Macaranas,
Marjorie- AMI/MD

Muscat, Oman - 18 february 2025- AL Misfat Equipment Company celebrated its 10th anniversary with an event that set a new benchmark in Oman's heavy equipment industry.

Bringing together industry leaders, partners, and key clients, the event was a spectacular showcase of the company's growth, achievements, and vision for the future.

A Landmark Celebration for AL Misfat Equipment Company

The night was filled with exciting announcements, live product demonstrations, and an inside look at the company's future expansion plans.

Attendees had the opportunity to experience firsthand the innovation and excellence that have made AL Misfat the leader in Oman's heavy equipment sector.

The most anticipated highlights of the evening included:

1. The official signing of a WEICHAI dealership agreement, expanding AL Misfat's offerings with high-performance, cost-effective engine solutions.
2. The grand unveiling of the powerful 800-ton SANY crane, Oman's largest and most advanced lifting machine.

As the 800-ton crane was revealed, attendees watched in amazement, witnessing a live demonstration that showcased its unmatched lifting



power, precision, and engineering excellence.

"This milestone reflects our commitment to leadership, service excellence, and providing Oman with cutting-edge solutions." Nassib B Kamar, GM

"AL Misfat's prompt service and availability of spare parts have given us peace of mind. The 800-ton crane raises their capabilities to the next level!" Client Testimonial from AL Nahda Overseas:

The Introduction of WEICHAI Engines: Expanding Equipment Solutions
In addition to unveiling the 800-ton

crane, AL Misfat announced its exclusive dealership with WEICHAI Engines, providing businesses access to affordable, high-performance, and durable engine solutions.

"With our new WEICHAI partnership, we now offer businesses the opportunity to access world-class engine solutions at competitive prices without compromising on quality," Samir F Chalhoub, Founder & CEO.

A Bigger Crane is Coming: Future Industry Innovations
While the 800-ton crane is a signif-

icant achievement, AL Misfat also teased an upcoming launch of an even bigger and more powerful crane that will soon hit the market.

"We are preparing to introduce an even larger and more advanced crane, pushing the boundaries of heavy lifting technology," Samir F Chalhoub, Founder & CEO.

Driving Oman's Heavy Equipment Industry Forward

As AL Misfat enters its second decade, the company remains focused on expanding its product range, enhancing after-sales support,

and investing in cutting-edge technology to ensure its clients receive the highest level of service and quality.

"Our journey is defined by trust, expertise, and continuous improvement. We are excited for what's next and remain committed to leading the heavy equipment industry in Oman," Nassib B Kamar, General Manager.

"The AL Misfat event was a defining moment. The 800-ton crane unveiling was an unforgettable milestone for Oman's construction sector." Client Testimonial from Arabian Logistics:

This milestone reflects our commitment to leadership, service excellence, and providing Oman with cutting-edge solutions

NASSIB B KAMAR, GM

With our new WEICHAI partnership, we now offer businesses the opportunity to access world-class engine solutions at competitive prices without compromising on quality

SAMIR F CHALHOUB, FOUNDER & CEO

Looking Ahead: More Innovations on the Horizon

As the evening concluded, the focus remained on AL Misfat's mission to drive growth and efficiency in Oman's construction, oil & gas, and industrial sectors. With a proven track record, expanding product offerings, and continuous investment in new technologies, AL Misfat Equipment Company is set to lead the market for years to come.

For inquiries, please contact: Phone: +968 92970970 & +968 99339966
Email: inf@almisfat.com
website: www.almisfat.com



Save for your future goals today

With Al Heson Savings Account and Ladies Account



Start Saving with BankDhofar Ladies account!

GIVE RESPONSIBLY

There is a heightened sense of charity and generosity during Ramadan. This leads to a rise in begging, while raising concerns about how to ensure help reaches those really in need. What measures can be implemented to minimise begging during the holy month? Here is what Muscat Daily readers said -

Ahmed al Harthy
Taxi driver

To minimise begging, we must strengthen our charity organisations and ensure that Zakat and Sadakh reach those in real need. Community awareness campaigns can educate people on responsible giving, directing donations to official charities instead

of street beggars. This will ensure support goes to the right people while discouraging professional begging.

Fatima al Balushi
Homemaker

One of the effective ways to tackle begging is by promoting structured aid through registered charities. Mosques

and community centres should collaborate to distribute food, clothing and financial assistance fairly. Additionally, authorities must take strict action against any form of begging.

Mohammed Rashid
Businessman

As business owners, we can help by

offering temporary jobs to the needy during Ramadan instead of direct handouts. This empowers them and discourages reliance on begging. At the same time, we must encourage donations to licensed charities that assess genuine cases, ensuring assistance reaches those truly struggling.

Imran Sheikh
Businessman

The best way to reduce begging is by ensuring that government-run and private charity programmes like Dar al Atta'a are equipped to help the needy for which one must donate to these entities. Free meal distribution, clothing drives and financial aid should

be well-organised so that no one is forced to beg.

Neha Sharma
Private sector employee

Instead of temporary relief and punishment, authorities should help them find sustainable livelihoods. During Ramadan, religious leaders can guide people to donate through proper channels rather than giving money on the streets, which may encourage more begging.

Rahul Desai
Entrepreneur

Corporate social responsibility initia-

tives should be leveraged to provide structured aid. Businesses can collaborate with NGOs to distribute iftar meals, fund education programmes and support employment opportunities for the underprivileged.

Murugan Subbarayan
Teacher

Restaurants can provide free food parcels at their shop door so that needy people can have it without begging. Shopping malls can have free counters for needy people during Ramadan; they can collect basic foods, vegetables and even old stocks of clothes. Mwasalat and other transport companies can offer free service during Ramadan, specifically in the evenings for iftar.



? NEXT ON YOUR SAY

Blood donations drop drastically during Ramadan. What can be done to encourage more donations during the month?

SEND YOUR COMMENTS

Share your comments in not more than 50 words along with your full name and profession before next Sunday, 10am, via WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram or muscatdaily@apexmedia.co.om
The views stated here are those of the respondents and not endorsed by Muscat Daily.

SEND US ON OUR NEW WHATSAPP NO 91953774

EMBRACE THE SPIRIT OF RAMADAN WITH MITSUBISHI

3-MONTHS EMI HOLIDAY*

FREE SERVICE 2 YEARS/30K to 5 YEARS/100K*

FREE INSURANCE & REGISTRATION*

FREE LLumar WINDOW TINT*

FREE RAMADAN GIFT

6 YEARS UNLIMITED KMS WARRANTY

For more information Call/WhatsApp 24 500 500

www.mitsubishi-motors.com.om

*Terms & Conditions Apply | Vehicle Images are used for illustrative purposes only, kindly contact your nearest dealer for more information | Offer valid from 23rd February 2025 to 24th April 2025.

الشركة العامة للسيارات
General Automotive Company
(A part of The Zubair Corporation)
CR. No: 1001477/2

صندوق غراس الوقفي الاستثماري
Gheras Endowment Investment Fund

U Capital
Urban Capital
إيجار كابتال

P.O. Box 1137, PC 111 - CPO, Sultanate of Oman, CR No. 1279406, Tel: +968 24949043/014, Fax: +968 24949099, Email: gheras@u-capital.net, Web: www.u-capital.net

INVITATION FOR ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Gheras Endowment Investment Fund takes the pleasure in inviting all the unitholders to attend the Ordinary General Meeting which will be held on Tuesday March 18, 2025, at 5 pm via the electronic platform to hold general meeting which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository (www.mcd.om). If the quorum to convene the annual General Meeting is not complete the second general meeting will be held on Wednesday March 19, 2025, at 7 pm via the electronic platform to hold general meeting which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository (www.mcd.om).to decide on the following:

Agenda of Ordinary General Meeting (OGM):

1. To consider and approve the proposal to distribute cash dividend equivalent to 0.06034 Baisa per unit for the financial year ending on 31 December 2024 to the unitholders on the date of the Ordinary General Meeting.

2. To elect two members for the Fund Management Body in accordance with Clause 22.3 of the Fund's Articles of Association.

According to the Fund Article of Association, and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology issued by Financial Services Authority, we would like to draw your attention to the following:

a. A legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the general meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCD.

b. Voting on any of the agenda items begins no more than 3 days before the date of the general meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the General Meetings. If the shareholder's shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be cancelled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the general meeting.

For any inquiries, please contact on telephone No 24949043 / 24949014

SEND YOUR REQUEST FOR

Birthday/Anniversary wishes to wish@apexmedia.co.om with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

Oman to showcase tourism potential at ITB Berlin

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman will highlight its tourism potential at ITB Berlin 2025, one of the world’s largest travel and trade exhibitions to be held from March 4 to 6. The sultanate will also launch a tourism advertising campaign in Germany targeting key locations in Berlin and Frankfurt coinciding with the event.

Ministry of Heritage and Tourism and over 55 Omani tourism and hospitality entities will participate to promote the sultanate’s cultural heritage, diverse travel experiences and investment opportunities.

Strategic partners, including Oman Air, Oman Airports, Omran Group and Visit Oman, will support the participation, which aligns with the government’s efforts to position the sultanate as a key global tourism



Participation in ITB Berlin will consolidate Oman’s presence on the world tourism map

HAITHAM MOHAMMED
AL GHASSANI

destination. The focus will be on attracting European tourists and promoting sustainable develop-



ment in the sector.

According to Haitham Mohammed al Ghassani, Director

General of Tourism Promotion, participation in ITB Berlin will consolidate Oman’s presence on

the world tourism map. “The exhibition provides an opportunity to showcase Oman’s tourism in-

vestment potential and experiences while fostering collaborations with Germany and other

participating countries,” he said.

ITB Berlin 2025 will include conferences and panel discussions on tourism trends, covering digital innovations, sustainable tourism and advanced travel experiences. The advertising campaign in Berlin and Frankfurt will use public transport and key locations to raise awareness on Oman’s travel offerings.

As part of its international expansion strategy, the ministry is working to introduce direct flights to Muscat and Salalah and enhance routes from Russia and Spain. A tourism representation office has been reopened in Russia, with plans for another in Spain.

With its cultural heritage, diverse landscapes and growing infrastructure, Oman aims to attract more visitors and strengthen its tourism sector as a key driver of economic growth.

Mountain trails, via ferrata set to spur Dhofar tourism

Our Correspondent
Salalah

Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MHT) has partnered with local companies to enhance adventure tourism in Dhofar through development of three mountain trails.

The new mountain trails in Ain Hasheer, Tabaldi and Ain Ghaydh will have clear signage and markings to guide visitors.

The ministry is currently focused on improving accessibility by paving parts of these trails, ensuring a memorable experience for adventurers while showcasing the stunning landscapes with baobab trees and other scenic spots.

An additional project will see introduction of a via ferrata track in Jabal Samhan, an exciting adventure activity set in the heights of Dhofar’s rugged mountains.

With Dhofar’s diverse geogra-



phy, home to over 40 renowned mountain tracks, these developments are poised to attract more adventure tourists to experience its caves, springs and lush natu-

ral beauty. These efforts marks a significant step towards making Dhofar a premier destination for adventure tourism in the region, MHT stated.



S Batinah wins national robotics championship

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Directorate General of Education South Batinah has secured first place in the national competition VEX IQ Robotics, claiming the Excellence Award and title of Robot Skills Champion. With this, the team has qualified to take part in an international competition to be held in the United States in May.

Organised by US-based Ro-botics Education and Competition Foundation, the contest challenges elementary and middle school students in robotics and research projects, enhancing their STEM skills through hands-on learning.

The South Batinah team comprises trainer Abdullah bin Salem al Abri from the In-

novation and Science Olympiad Department and four students - Zakaria bin Hilal al Kharousi, Al Waleed bin Khalid al Bahri, Moaz bin Khalid al Mayahi and Abdulaziz bin Salem al Kharousi - from Sheikh Abu Qahtan al Hijari Basic Education School in Al Awabi.

Khalid bin Abdullah al Hinai, the school’s principal, said, “Achieving first place in Oman in this national competition enhanced the students’ experiences and increased their passion for technology and robotics, while emphasising the importance of technical education and practical skills in preparing a generation capable of facing the challenges of the future. We hope that this team will achieve success at the global level.”

Seeb Ramadan Market launched for SMEs, job opportunities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Seeb Wali’s Office has launched ‘Seeb Ramadan Market’ aimed at supporting artisan families and creating opportunities for job-seekers during the holy month.

A statement said Ahmed bin Ali al Shehhi, Wali of Seeb, presided over a meeting of the team responsible for managing the initiative on Saturday. The meeting focused on enhancing partnership between the public and private sectors, as well as discussed ways to invest in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These efforts are geared towards encouraging entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable development.

The wali emphasised the importance of creating an attractive investment environment that fosters the development of new projects and supports artisan families. He highlighted the initiative’s goal of enhancing citizens’ living standards through effective and sustainable measures.

“This initiative is part of Seeb Wali Office’s broader efforts to boost the local economy, support entrepreneurship, and provide valuable opportunities for productive families and entrepreneurs to advance their businesses,” Shehhi added.

ABRAJ

ENERGY SERVICES SAOG

Chairman’s Report

Dear Shareholders,

The Board of Directors is pleased to welcome the Shareholders to the eighth Annual General Meeting of Abraj Energy Services SAOG- (Abraj) and to present the Annual Report for the financial year ended 31st December 2024.

Abraj had, sustainably, performed well throughout the year 2024, with good steady results from the Drilling and workover services and a remarkable contribution from Well Services. Abraj has successfully managed to grow outside Oman by commencing the WJO project on schedule for the provision of drilling rigs in Kuwait, reflecting its commitment to operational efficiency and project execution excellence. This achievement not only strengthens Abraj’s foothold in the regional market but also enhances its reputation as a reliable and capable service provider. With a solid track record and a growing presence, Abraj is well-positioned to sustain its current growth trajectory and explore further expansion opportunities in the industry.”

workover services and a remarkable contribution from Well Services. Abraj has successfully managed to grow outside Oman by commencing the WJO project on schedule for the provision of drilling rigs in Kuwait, reflecting its commitment to operational efficiency and project execution excellence. This achievement not only strengthens Abraj’s foothold in the regional market but also enhances its reputation as a reliable and capable service provider. With a solid track record and a growing presence, Abraj is well-positioned to sustain its current growth trajectory and explore further expansion opportunities in the industry.”

Abraj is focused on providing services around Oil and Gas Wells, during and post wells construction. From building a wider service portfolio, Abraj now focuses on strategic top-tier services coupled with strong operational efficiency to realize maximum financial returns and sustainable growth. Abraj continues to benefit from the strength of long-term contracts in generating sufficient cash flow for growth.

Abraj Energy Services SAOG Performance:

HSE:

Abraj had a very good HSE Performance in the year 2024. Abraj did not had any LTI in 2024 and as a result LTIF remained zero against the threshold of 0.25, whereas TRCF by end of the year was 0.19 against the threshold of 1.0. RTAF remain 0.08 against the threshold of 0.20. Management site audits were completed successfully as per plan in 2024. Also, level 1 contractor audit completed as per set plan in 2024. Medical fitness to work compliance achieved 99% by the end of 2024.

All Abraj units (Rigs, Workover and Well Services) achieved LTI free year in 2024 however below units LTI free years are among the top:

Rig 207 completed 13 years LTI free in 2024.

Rig 202 completed 12 years LTI free in 2024.

Hoist 2 completed 12 years LTI free in 2024.

Muscat warehouse achieved 11 years LTI free in 2024.

Rig 209 and Rig 303 achieved 10 years LTI free in 2024.

Rig 204, Rig 210, Hoist 1 & Rig 304 achieved 8 years LTI free in 2024.

Rigs 105, 201 and Muscat workshop achieved 7 years LTI free in 2024.

Rigs 208, PDO Cementing, OQ Cementing and Adam yard completed 6 years LTI free

To enhance employee and stakeholder engagement, the HSE department conducted a series of dedicated HSE forums and workshops, including:

CCTV Workshops & Engagements with Supervisors.

HSE Forums with Business Partners, Drivers and Journey Managers.

In 2024, Abraj HSE team participation and recognition in key industry events highlighted our leadership in safety innovation:

Achieved the Gold Award for CCTV Support Center and the Silver Award for HSE Management System at the ASPG GCC HSE Forum.

Won the PDO HSE Contractor Award for Personal Safety & Health Projects with the CCTV initiative.

Recognized at the OPAL Knowledge Exchange Forum for sharing best practices in contractor management.

Presented the “Abraj CCTV Support Center” at the IADC Middle East Conference.

Additionally, Abraj dominated the Top 10 positions among 79 Global Shell rigs and proudly secured First place in HSE performance.

Drilling & Workover:

In 2024, Abraj achieved a significant milestone by commencing its first international project in Kuwait (WJO), deploying two rigs in February and July respectively. This expansion has increased Abraj’s fleet to 27 drilling rigs, achieving an very good 86% utilization for drilling rigs and 100% utilization for workover rigs. With a 29% market share in drilling rigs, Abraj has solidified its position as the leader and national champion of Oman’s oilfield services sector

Well Services:

All WS units closed the year with an excellent record of LTI free operations

Achieved >98% operational efficiency across all WS units resulting high client satisfaction

Improved overall asset utilization, specifically enhancing fracturing asset efficiency despite the delayed start of the project

Successfully passed the comprehensive Operational Readiness Audit by PDO for the second fracturing fleet, facilitating a smooth launch of the Gas Frac campaign—a key milestone for competing in the next major Frac tender.

Secured a major cementing tender with PDO and made strong progress in technical validation and scope allocation, positively impacting financial performance.

Successfully renewed API Q2 certification.

Successful participation in technical papers at international forums (IADC) under well integrity and digitalization categories

Made notable progress in collaboration discussion with Sonatrach, which promises future regional expansion opportunities for well services.

Made significant progress in Omanizing key technical roles and developing Omani fresh graduates through an extensive training and development program, preparing them for key positions within Well Services. This initiative received positive feedback from customers

Acknowledgements:

The Board of Directors expresses their sincere and deep gratitude to the vision and wise great leadership of the country’s leader for maintaining sustainable growth and prosperity of the Omani Economy. Abraj Board also wishes to place on record its thanks and gratitude to the Ministry of Oil & Gas, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Ministry of Manpower, and Capital Markets Authority for their guidance and support. Abraj Board also would like to appreciate and thank you for the valuable support and guidance from the Shareholders, Bankers, and Suppliers. The Board thanks the Management team and all Abraj employees for their dedication and commitment to meeting challenging situations.

Ayad Al Balushi

Chairman of the Company

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS OF 31 DECEMBER

	2024 RO’000	2023 RO’000
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property and equipment	201,173	191,405
Right-of-use assets	4,081	5,502
Intangible assets	173	231
Deferred tax assets	403	426
Capex advances	982	4,546
Total non-current assets	206,812	202,110
Current assets		
Trade receivables	40,135	39,448
Advances, prepayments, and other receivables	2,816	2,937
Deferred expenses	93	119
Inventories	28,416	23,786
Cash and cash equivalents	5,473	8,071
Total current assets	76,933	74,361
Total assets	283,745	276,471
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES		
Capital and reserves		
Share capital	77,020	77,020
Legal reserve	12,405	10,718
Retained earnings	56,895	58,040
Total equity	146,320	145,778
Non-current liabilities		
Term loans – non-current portion	74,017	72,060
Deferred income - non-current portion	1,058	1,094
Deferred tax liabilities	3,641	4,407
Employees’ end of services benefits	2,398	2,218
Lease liabilities - non-current portion	3,178	3,565
Total non-current liabilities	84,292	83,344
Current liabilities		
Term loans - current portion	16,801	13,232
Lease liabilities – current	1,012	2,212
Trade payables	16,459	17,891
Other payables	14,453	10,578
Deferred income - current portion	660	762
Income tax payable	3,748	2,674
Total current liabilities	53,133	47,349
Total liabilities	137,425	130,693
Total equity and liabilities	283,745	276,471

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER

	2024 RO’000	2023 RO’000
Revenue	151,646	144,346
Cost of sales	(113,666)	(111,430)
Gross profit	37,980	32,916
General and administrative expenses	(8,532)	(7,410)
Other expenses	(1,730)	(736)
Other income	659	10
Impairment (charge) / reversal of fixed assets	(2,706)	757
Expected credit loss (charge) / reversal on trade receivables	(16)	140
Operating profit	25,655	25,677
Finance costs	(5,966)	(6,323)
Finance income	270	142
Net Finance costs	(5,696)	(6,181)
Profit before tax	19,959	19,496
Income tax expense	(3,089)	(2,935)
Profit for the year	16,870	16,561
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	16,870	16,561
Earnings per share		
Basic and diluted earnings per share-OMR	0.022	0.022



Chairman’s Report For the Year Ended 31 December 2024



Dear Shareholders,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Liva Group SAOG (the “Group” or “Company”), I am pleased to present the consolidated results of the Group for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Economic Overview

The GCC region is poised for strong growth in 2025, with a projected GDP increase of 3.9%, significantly exceeding global forecasts. This robust growth is fueled by strong domestic spending, government-led diversification initiatives, & a growing population of expatriates & tourists, creating a larger market for insurance products. While inflation has stabilised, operational costs remain a concern for insurers, necessitating technological advancements & automation.

Significant infrastructure development continues across the GCC, with Saudi Arabia leading major transformational projects & the UAE focusing on sustainable energy & enhanced utilities. Regional investments in social infrastructure, including healthcare & education, are also crucial. Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030, the UAE’s decarbonisation efforts, Oman’s diversification into technology, Kuwait’s extensive development program, & Bahrain’s focus on digitisation all contribute to a rapidly expanding pool of insurable assets, driving increased demand for insurance across the GCC.

Oman, Qatar, & Bahrain are preparing to launch new mandatory health insurance programs. Notably, Oman’s Dhamani initiative, which will progressively cover employees, dependents, tourists, & visitors, is expected to be fully operational by late 2025, creating a significant market expansion for insurers.

Financial Performance

Liva Group SAOG navigated the demanding conditions of 2024, marked by extreme weather events, by reinforcing its fundamental business operations. We successfully advanced our strategic goals of diversification & expansion, demonstrating resilience & forward momentum

The Group reported a 6% year-on-year increase in insurance revenue in 2024, achieving OMR 329M, driven by the successful implementation of key growth initiatives across its core markets of Sultanate of Oman (Oman), United Arab Emirates (UAE), & Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). The growth in revenue reflects the Group’s continued efforts to achieve consistent year-on-year improvements whilst expanding its regional presence.

The Group reported an investment income of OMR 14.3 million in 2024, reflecting an increase of 11% from OMR 12.8 million in 2023. This growth is attributed to the optimisation of the portfolio through a more proactive investment strategy. The Group maintains a diversified investment portfolio, combining debt & equity instruments to strike a balance between risk mitigation & maximising returns.

While the Group reported a loss after tax of OMR 15.9 million in the first half of 2024 due to extreme weather, performance in the second half of the year was strong. The Group reported a Profit After Tax of RO 10.9 million, a 47% increase compared to the second half of 2023. This reduced the full-year loss after tax to OMR 5 million as of 31 December 2024.

Outlook

Financial & Strategic

The Group’s strategy for 2025 focuses on accelerating organic & inorganic growth to capture a larger market share in core markets. The Group aims to further enhance underwriting performance by expanding profitable segments, improving operational efficiency, & executing targeted expense rationalisation.

Growth in both Personal & Commercial Lines will be driven by strategic partnerships, enhanced digital customer experience, the expansion of our product suite, & entry into new segments. The Group will also leverage strategic international partnerships to further accelerate growth across core markets.

Expansion of Health & Life will be driven through diversification into profitable segments & capitalisation of mandatory health regulatory changes. These initiatives are designed to build upon the already established foundations for continuous, scalable, & profitable growth in the years ahead.

The Group continues to strengthen its strategic partnerships by leveraging digital capabilities. In 2024, the Group partnered with Salik, the UAE’s electronic toll system, offering motor insurance products to their customer base. The Group significantly enhanced its digital distribution channels in line with its customer focused ambition, simplifying accessibility & education of the motor product.

2024 saw the expansion of mandatory health insurance throughout the UAE. A significant milestone for Liva’s UAE operations was achieving Participating Insurer status with the Dubai Health Authority in December 2024. This allows us to extend health insurance coverage to Low Salary Band (LSB) workers, greatly improving accessibility & convenience for our clients.

Regional Growth

Growth in KSA represents a strategic opportunity for the Group, & a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with Malath Cooperative Insurance, as disclosed on the Saudi Arabian Stock Exchange (Tadawul). This potential merger is one of the key steps being explored toward our goal as a leading GCC insurance provider, delivering value to customers & generating sustainable returns for shareholders. A comprehensive due diligence process is currently underway to ensure optimal outcomes for all stakeholders ahead of any formal agreements.

Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)

At Liva, Environmental, Social, & Governance (ESG) is integral to our strategy, driving long-term value for stakeholders. In 2024, we advanced our ESG strategy, established a robust framework, & prepared our inaugural ESG report, due for publication in March 2025.

Our ESG approach aligns with our purpose in instilling confidence in people to live life & prepare them for the unexpected while also reflecting local priorities such as Oman Vision 2040 & regulatory requirements. ESG strengthens resilience, financial security, & risk management, allowing us to address key challenges & provide security for our stakeholders in a dynamic world.

Other Achievements

Liva maintained its AM Best ‘A-’ (Excellent) financial strength rating, underpinned by a robust balance sheet, prudent investment strategy, & diversified GCC presence. Ongoing operational enhancements support this strong rating. Additionally, AM Best officially assigned Financial Strength Ratings of ‘A-’ (Excellent), & Long-Term Issuer Credit Rating of ‘a-’ (Excellent) to our subsidiaries – Liva Bahrain & Liva Oman, including their branches.

Liva Group has received numerous accolades in recognition of its excellence, innovation, & commitment to stakeholders. Awards include The Oman Forum, Insurance Company of the Year at the AIWA (Alam Al Iqtisad Wal Aamal) Awards & Rebranding Campaign of the Year at Oman Leadership Awards, Best Marketing Video Concept at the TOMI (The Oman Marketing Impact) Awards.

Other accolades included three recognitions from Transform MEA Awards: gold for Best Visual Identity in the Lifestyle & Wellbeing Sector, & silver for Best Naming Strategy (Rename) & Best Corporate Rebrand Following a Merger or Acquisition.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to our inspirational leader His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik for his vision & initiatives as he continues to lead the country on the path of development, peace, & enduring prosperity.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the Financial Services Authority of Oman, Muscat Stock Exchange, Central Banks of UAE, & Bahrain, Insurance Authority of Saudi Arabia, Insurance regulatory unit of Kuwait & the Qatar Financial Centre Regulatory Authority for their continued support & guidance. I would also like to thank our dedicated teams at Liva Group & across our Group companies for their commitment & hard work.

Khalid Muhammad AlZubair
Chairman

Liva Group SAOG

P.O. Box 798, P C 117, Sultanate of Oman
Tel. +968 2476 6800
info@livagroup.co | www.livagroup.co
CR No. 1487876 | VAT OM1200362117 | TIN 1879

Separate and consolidated statement of financial position				
as at 31 December 2024				
	Group		Parent Company	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
Assets	RO	RO	RO	RO
Cash and bank balances	25,552,288	54,003,295	5,798,003	11,285,718
Bank deposits	139,067,233	122,753,154	25,015,066	19,173,355
Investment in securities	136,671,295	123,668,132	29,452,405	27,617,360
Investment in subsidiaries	-	-	144,198,987	145,516,034
Insurance contract assets	204,150	889,696	-	-
Reinsurance contract assets	75,450,225	28,672,971	1,037,683	1,716,205
Other receivables and prepayment	20,792,100	31,883,319	3,390,183	22,506,901
Loans to policyholders	28,374	31,634	-	-
Property and equipment	8,042,711	7,636,344	3,800,735	3,492,307
Deferred tax asset	2,236,808	517,379	1,111,539	391,514
Intangible assets (including goodwill)	27,577,228	28,307,897	231,773	255,369
Total assets	435,622,412	398,363,821	214,036,374	231,954,763
Equity and Liabilities				
Equity				
Share capital	69,013,902	69,013,902	69,013,902	69,013,902
Legal reserve	9,775,095	9,775,095	9,775,095	9,775,095
Contingency reserve	17,576,121	17,576,121	17,576,121	17,576,121
Revaluation reserve	352,345	352,345	352,345	352,345
Mandatory convertible bonds	4,700,000	-	4,700,000	-
Fair value reserve	4,714,625	3,336,100	4,714,625	3,336,100
Foreign exchange reserve	(59,528)	(60,693)	(59,528)	(60,693)
Retained earnings	(4,437,581)	7,220,268	(1,662,306)	9,995,543
Total equity attributable to shareholders of the Parent	101,634,979	107,213,138	104,410,254	109,988,413
Non-controlling interests	20,071,327	17,361,561	-	-
Total equity	121,706,306	124,574,699	104,410,254	109,988,413
Liabilities				
Insurance contract liabilities	198,582,116	148,595,008	36,163,245	32,879,639
Reinsurance contract liabilities	20,156,045	13,199,660	1,860,306	978,509
Other liabilities	18,773,923	33,265,679	26,930,541	16,374,161
Bank borrowings	69,235,997	71,706,010	44,643,997	71,706,010
Corporate tax payable	7,168,025	7,022,765	28,031	28,031
Total liabilities	313,916,106	273,789,122	109,626,120	121,966,350
Total equity and liabilities	435,622,412	398,363,821	214,036,374	231,954,763

Separate and consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income				
for the year ended 31 December 2024				
	Group		Parent Company	
	2024	2023	2024	2023
	RO	RO	RO	RO
Insurance revenue	329,459,676	310,756,743	116,621,868	159,041,827
Insurance service expense	(352,284,597)	(279,207,234)	(120,606,465)	(159,374,834)
Insurance service result before reinsurance contracts held	(22,824,921)	31,549,509	(3,984,597)	(333,007)
Allocation of reinsurance premiums	(76,705,294)	(51,359,635)	(26,823,086)	(27,567,102)
Amounts recoverable from reinsurers for incurred claims	93,886,004	28,852,971	26,360,361	25,965,744
Net income/expense from reinsurance contracts held	17,180,710	(22,506,664)	(462,725)	(1,601,358)
Insurance service result	(5,644,211)	9,042,845	(4,447,322)	(1,934,365)
Investment income - net	14,309,324	12,821,941	2,932,452	4,667,635
Share of (loss) / profit from subsidiaries	-	-	(1,891,659)	10,251,896
Expected credit losses on financial assets	(4,877)	51,179	(354)	(14,969)
Total investment income	14,304,447	12,873,120	1,040,439	14,904,562
Insurance finance expenses for insurance contracts issued	(2,039,537)	(3,409,702)	(225,385)	(1,451,901)
Reinsurance finance income for reinsurance contracts held	183,806	1,191,676	293,743	358,338
Net financial result	(1,855,731)	(2,218,026)	68,358	(1,093,563)
Other operating income	2,473,377	4,752,583	2,271,062	2,860,611
Finance cost	(4,344,685)	(4,449,163)	(3,137,184)	(4,391,815)
Non attributable Expenses	(10,510,994)	(12,500,237)	(3,187,716)	(4,757,746)
(Loss) / profit before tax	(5,577,797)	7,501,122	(7,392,363)	5,587,684
Corporate tax	560,530	(1,124,613)	771,557	172,953
(Loss) / profit for the year	(5,017,267)	6,376,509	(6,620,806)	5,760,637
(Loss) / profit for the period attributable to:				
Equity holders of the Parent Company	(6,620,806)	5,760,637	(6,620,806)	5,760,637
Non-controlling interests	1,603,539	615,872	-	-
	(5,017,267)	6,376,509	(6,620,806)	5,760,637
Other comprehensive income				
(Items that are or may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss):				
Exchange differences on translation of foreign operations	1,165	(4,130)	1,165	(4,130)
Changes in fair value of debt instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income – net	1,457,920	880,917	(450,800)	892,020
(Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss):				
Share of FVOCI from subsidiaries	-	-	802,432	(146,758)
Change in value of investments carried at fair value through other comprehensive income (unrealized gain – Equity investments)	835,223	256,327	835,223	403,085
Movement in other reseves	-	(10,457)	61	(11,103)
Other comprehensive income	2,294,308	1,122,657	1,188,081	1,133,114
Total comprehensive (loss) / income for the year	(2,722,959)	7,499,166	(5,432,725)	6,893,751
Total comprehensive Loss for the period attributable to:				
Equity holders of the Parent Company	(5,432,725)	6,893,751	(5,432,725)	6,893,751
Non-controlling interests	2,709,766	605,415	-	-
	(2,722,959)	7,499,166	(5,432,725)	6,893,751

Moody's lifts Omani banks' outlook to 'positive'

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Moody's Ratings has recently revised its outlook for the Omani banking sector to positive from stable, citing improving operating conditions and loan quality in the sultanate's banks.

In a report, Moody's stated that strong business and consumer confidence, along with a pipeline of projects, will continue to drive non-oil business activity

for Omani banks. It said, 'Along with business and consumer confidence, strong momentum in tourism and a pipeline of projects in manufacturing, transportation, and renewable energy will help boost economic activity in the non-oil sectors, where banks conduct most of their business.'

The rating agency expects Oman's non-hydrocarbon GDP growth to be around 3.0% in 2025-2026, slightly lower than 4.0% in 2024, when growth was



supported by the commissioning of a refinery project and an uptick in trade. Moody's also forecasts that Oman's real GDP growth

will accelerate to 2.4% in 2025, up from an estimated 1.7% in 2024, aided by a slight recovery in oil production compared to

2024, in line with the current OPEC+ agreement.

Moody's expects Omani banks' loan quality to improve, as economic growth will strengthen borrowers' repayment capacity. It also anticipates that banks will continue delivering steady profitability while maintaining solid capital buffers.

'Problem loans will likely decrease further in 2025-2026, down from 3.6% of the sector's loan book as of September 2024,

as economic growth supports borrowers' repayment capacity. We also expect single-digit lending growth in a supportive operating environment,' the rating agency said.

However, Omani banks' loan books remain exposed to concentration risk due to large borrowers and single-sector exposure, reflecting the country's limited but improving economic diversification. This creates vulnerabilities to individual defaults

or sector-specific stresses, as noted by Moody's.

According to Moody's, Omani banks' capital levels remain well above regulatory requirements, with strong earnings and good profit retention helping to sustain these levels. It expects tangible common equity (TCE) to risk-weighted assets to remain around 13%-14% over the next 12 to 18 months (compared to 13% as of September 2024).

OQEP reports RO841mn revenue for 2024

Our Correspondent
Muscat

OQ Exploration and Production (OQEP) has announced its financial results for the fiscal year 2024, achieving an EBITDA of RO614mn. The financial results highlight OQEP's continued ability to generate strong and predictable cash flows from its high-quality asset base.

The company reported full-year revenue of RO841mn for 2024 and delivered full-year production of 228,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. It also recorded free cash flow of RO251mn for the year.

OQEP has already distributed an aggregate dividend of RO173mn in 2024, and the Board of Directors has proposed an additional cash dividend of RO57.68mn. Shareholders will receive a cash dividend of 7.21 baizas per ordinary share. The proposed cash dividend is subject to the formal approval of the Annual General Meeting of shareholders, scheduled for March 12, 2025.

In a press statement, Ahmed al Azkawi, Chief Executive Officer of OQEP, said, "OQEP has delivered a strong set of results for the year, built upon our position as a low-cost operator of high-quality assets, generating industry-leading returns. During the year, OQEP listed its shares on the Muscat Stock Exchange. The offer generated strong investor demand and raised RO780mn.

As part of our strategy to deliver shareholder value, we announced a planned return of capital in the form of dividends, with a target base dividend of RO230mn for 2025 and 2026, subject to company performance and board approval."

"We continue to develop our assets in line with our strategy. We were able to increase the reserves of our key asset, Block 60, through improved recovery techniques, including infill drilling and new discoveries. We are also discussing with our partners the opportunities to unlock further growth across our portfolio, as well as pursuing new licensing opportunities."



OPEC+ rethinking oil output ramp up

Julianne Geiger

OPEC+ is still weighing its second quarter oil production plans, according to eight OPEC+ sources who spoke to Reuters last week – with Trump-incited complications creating an uncertain future for oil market balance.

What's at stake is OPEC+'s plans to lift oil production beginning in April 2025 – something the group normally has to have decided a month prior. Their decision to keep current production quotas steady or to increase as planned will have a profound effect on global oil markets and not all OPEC+ members are headed into April on the same page, the anonymous sources suggest.

There are essentially two mindsets, with Saudi Arabia – the ever-sober OPEC member

known for its conservative production approach even at its own expense – on one side, and the UAE – a member itching to use its space capacity – on the other.

The disconnect between the two has, in the past, called into question the stability of the otherwise tight-knit group, with the UAE rumored to be contemplating its exit from OPEC if it didn't get to ramp up production at least partially in line with its capacity.

Trump has been vocal about the need for OPEC to ramp up oil production to bring the prices down and stop the war between Russia and Ukraine. "You gotta bring down the oil price," Trump said earlier this year at the World Economic Forum in Davos. "That will end that war. You could end that war."

(Source: Oilprice.com)



A'Sharqiya Investments Holding Co. (SAOG)

P.O. Box 47 PC 118 Al Harthy Complex Sultanate of Oman

Tel: +968 24566160 / Fax: +968 24566162 / Email: admin@asharqiya.com

Chairman's Report for the Quarter ended 31 December 2024

Dear Shareholders,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Annual General Meeting of your company. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to present before you the Annual Report for the year 2024 along with the audited consolidated financial statements of A'Sharqiya Investment Holding Co. (SAOG) and its subsidiary, Qalhath Real Estate Investments & Services SPC (QREIS).

Investment Environment 2024

The World Economy is estimated to have grown by 3.2% in 2024 after an increase of 3.1% in 2023. This modest acceleration was primarily driven by stronger-than-expected resilience in the United States and several large emerging market and developing economies, as well as fiscal support in China tempered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. With the elevated interest rates to fight inflation and withdrawal of fiscal support amid high debt weighing on economic activity, the likelihood of a hard landing has receded and risks to growth are broadly balanced. Looking ahead, the IMF projects global growth to remain steady at 3.2% in 2025.

The financial markets across asset classes had a good year in 2024 despite elevated interest rates driven by surprising resilience in the economic activity in the US & other developed markets, considering rate cuts especially towards the end of the year.

2024 witnessed improved allocation of investments, the resulting benefit of which helped the Company overcome fall in dividend income from key holdings. The Company is continuing its efforts to increase diversification in the Company's Investment portfolio across asset classes, geographic concentration and sectors.

Performance for the year

In line with the investment environment, your company is constantly monitoring and continues its efforts to stay focused on adding value to its investee companies with a long-term perspective and to take advantage of attractive new investment opportunities.

For the full year ended December 31, 2024, your company generated an Operating Income of RO 1,353,252 as compared to RO 1,221,308 during the previous year 2023 reflecting an increase of 10.80%. The profit after tax arising from the company's operations during this period was RO 625,739 reflecting an increase of 27.25% as compared to RO 491,578 during the previous year 2023. The increase in dividend income (56.85% increase) from portfolio companies and the increase in Interest income (55.89% increase) were offset by decrease in finance income on lease receivables (-24.58%) and other income (-30.77), this is a result of the diversification efforts undertaken by the Company

during the last few years. The Company took advantage of the high yields available in the market by increasing its exposure to fixed income instruments during the year.

The increase in the fair value of the company's investment portfolio under the FVOCI category was RO 256,560 for the year 2024 as compared to a decrease of RO341,430 for the year 2023. The total comprehensive income for the year 2024 is RO 865,903 as compared to RO 150,148 in 2023. The substantial increase is primarily driven by increase in share prices of certain key holdings.

Despite the drop in fair values in some of the holdings, the company with its long-term perspective is firm in its belief that the investments will yield long term growth and returns based on each company's underlying fundamentals. The long-term relationship with OLING through its association with its Subsidiary Qalhath Real Estate investment continues to be strong and the company looks forward to continued association in the years to come which will be mutually beneficial to both.

The total assets of the company increased by 1.34% and is at RO 18,742,024 at the end of 2024 as compared to RO 18,477,020 at the end of 2023. The company's Shareholder Funds increased by 1.77% to RO 14,873,053 from 14,613,952 as compared a decrease of 1.3% in 2023. The book value of the company's equity share is 165 Baizas as on December 31, 2024, compared to 162 Baizas per share as on December 31, 2023.

Outlook for 2025

The global GDP is projected to grow 3.2% in 2025 as per the IMF's World Economic Outlook (WEO). The IMF forecasts Oman's GDP to grow by 3.1% in 2025.

The 2025 Omani Budget framework aims at achieving a set of objectives and priorities, notably fiscal sustainability, control inflation, a diversified economy, improve Oman's Credit Rating, digital transformation etc. These initiatives are expected to bode well for the economy in the long-term.

The outlook for our investment portfolio is positive with the Company's increasing diversification into key geographies and other asset classes. The Company will continue to support its investee companies in the local market with a long-term view and focus on opportunities in other markets to achieve effective diversification of the portfolio.

Corporate Governance

I am pleased to confirm that the company is fully committed to the Financial Services Authority's Code of Corporate Governance for Public Listed Companies. The Board of Directors has established a fully empowered Audit Committee which is effectively performing its role in accordance with the afore mentioned Code. A report on Corporate Governance and a Management Discussion and Analysis forms part of the Annual Report. The Corporate Governance Report has been audited by the statutory auditor and forms part of the Annual Report.

Acknowledgment

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq for his able leadership of the country. I also thank the shareholders for their continued support and for the confidence reposed on the company. My appreciation also goes to the company's management and staff for their contributions and commitment to the company.

Mohammed Ali Mohammed Al Fannah
Chairman
February 25, 2025

Consolidated and separate statement of financial position as at 31 December 2024

	Group		Parent Company	
	31 December 2024	31 December 2023	31 December 2024	31 December 2023
ASSETS				
Non-current assets				
Plant and equipment	256,211	271,434	1,107	1,818
Lease receivables	3,558,537	3,518,927	-	-
Investments in equity instruments at fair value through other comprehensive income ("FVOCI")	8,050,105	7,798,096	8,050,105	7,798,096
Investments in equity instruments at fair value through profit or loss ("FVTPL")	557,564	416,074	557,564	416,074
Investments in debt instruments at FVOCI	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
Investments in debt instruments at amortised cost	3,200,342	2,295,028	3,200,342	2,295,028
Investment in a subsidiary	-	-	250,000	250,000
Deferred tax asset	23,067	39,463	23,067	39,463
Total non-current assets	15,795,826	14,489,022	12,232,185	10,950,479
Current assets				
Lease receivables	29,890	854,141	-	-
Other receivables	316,774	190,759	231,214	126,841
Term deposits	1,950,000	1,500,000	-	-
Cash and bank balances	631,534	1,443,098	585,452	966,133
Total current assets	2,928,198	3,987,998	816,666	1,092,974
TOTAL ASSETS	18,724,024	18,477,020	13,048,851	12,043,453
EQUITY AND LIABILITIES				
Capital and reserves				
Share capital	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000	9,000,000
Legal reserve	1,868,984	1,733,722	1,785,650	1,650,388
Fair value reserve	835,653	608,092	835,653	608,092
Retained earnings	3,168,416	3,272,138	1,183,406	560,255
Total capital and reserves	14,873,053	14,613,952	12,804,709	11,818,735
Non-current liabilities				
Employees' benefit liabilities	196,894	191,365	157,801	155,279
Lease liabilities	3,489,037	3,518,227	-	-
Total non-current liabilities	3,685,931	3,709,592	157,801	155,279
Current liabilities				
Other payables	57,670	65,236	39,412	39,439
Lease liabilities	29,890	16,966	-	-
Income tax payable	77,480	71,274	46,929	30,000
Total current liabilities	165,040	153,476	86,341	69,439
Total liabilities	3,850,971	3,863,068	244,142	224,718
TOTAL EQUITY AND LIABILITIES	18,724,024	18,477,020	13,048,851	12,043,453
Net assets per share	0.165	0.162	0.142	0.131

Consolidated and separate statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Group		Parent Company	
	Year ended 31 December 2024	Year ended 31 December 2023	Year ended 31 December 2024	Year ended 31 December 2023
Dividend income	622,239	396,704	1,522,239	796,704
Interest income	305,914	196,233	219,633	157,654
Unrealised fair value (losses)/gains on investments at FVOCI	(26,027)	37,409	(26,027)	37,409
Realised gains on disposal of investments at FVOCI	44,938	41,957	44,938	41,957
Finance income on lease receivables	318,570	422,434	-	-
Other income	87,620	126,570	86,098	101,655
	1,353,254	1,221,308	1,846,881	1,135,379
Expenses				
Salaries and other related staff costs	(304,507)	(318,974)	(304,507)	(318,974)
General and administrative expenses	(135,134)	(131,795)	(131,515)	(120,488)
Depreciation	(16,658)	(18,232)	(2,146)	(3,702)
Other finance costs	(11,613)	(5,758)	(11,613)	(5,758)
	(467,912)	(474,759)	(449,781)	(448,922)
Operating profit for the year	885,342	746,549	1,397,100	686,457
Finance costs on lease liabilities	(184,570)	(184,931)	-	-
Net profit before tax for the year	700,772	561,618	1,397,100	686,457
Income tax expense	(75,032)	(70,040)	(44,482)	(28,766)
Net profit after tax for the year	625,739	491,578	1,352,618	657,691
Other comprehensive income / (loss):				
Items that will not be reclassified to profit or loss:				
Unrealised fair value gains/(losses) on investments at FVOCI	256,560	(341,430)	256,560	(341,430)
Deferred tax charge on unrealised fair value loss on investments at FVOCI	(16,396)	-	(16,396)	-
Other comprehensive income / (loss) for the year	240,164	(341,430)	240,164	341,430)
Total comprehensive income attributable to the shareholders of the Parent Company	865,903	150,148	1,592,782	316,261
Earnings per share-basic and diluted	0.007	0.005	0.015	0.007

Note: The complete accounts will be sent by mail to any shareholder who requests them in Arabic or English as requested, within 7 days of receipt of the request.

Al Jenaibi unveils all-new, fully electric Mini Aceman in Oman

Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, the exclusive importer of BMW and Mini in Oman, has officially launched the all-new, fully electric Mini Aceman, ushering in an exciting new Mini era in the sultanate.

Alongside the Aceman, the latest generation of the Mini 3-Door Convertible, 3-Door Electric, and 5-Door models have also arrived, giving Mini lovers more ways to experience the brand's signature fun, go-kart handling, and unmistakable charm.

The all-electric Mini Aceman is a game-changer - striking in design, packed with smart technology, and built for urban adventurers who want both style and sustainability. From its bold new octagonal grille to its dynamic LED lighting and recycled aluminium alloy wheels, the Aceman makes an instant statement.

Inside, the world's first circular OLED display is the highlight, acting as both an infotainment hub and a digital cockpit. And because no adventure should be limited, the Aceman offers seamless at-home and on-the-go charging, ensuring that every journey is electrified.

Mini fans can also look forward to the launch of the re-freshed Mini 3-Door Convertible perfect for those who love the open road. The new Mini 5-Door arrives with a bigger, more aerodynamic body, yet still delivers



New Mini Aceman takes centre stage while three other models blend the brand's iconic design with its fun individuality and cutting-edge innovation

the iconic Mini experience, making it the ideal choice for those who need extra space without sacrificing driving fun.

And for those ready to make

the switch to electric, the Mini 3-Door Electric is here to prove that sustainability and excitement can go hand in hand.

Speaking about the launch,

Rachid Zamani, Managing Director of Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, said: "The Mini brand has always been about pushing boundaries and embracing individuality. The new Mini Aceman is a perfect reflection of that philosophy - it's bold, electric, and full of personality. At Al Jenaibi International Automobiles, we are proud to bring this next generation of Mini models to Oman, offering drivers a range of

choices that deliver Mini's signature driving fun with cutting-edge technology and sustainable innovation. We invite all Mini fans to visit our showroom and experience these exciting new models firsthand."

To make the moment even more special, Al Jenaibi International Automobiles is rolling out an exclusive Ramadan offer, making it the perfect time to join the Mini family. Customers who

purchase a new Mini can enjoy Mini Service for five years or 100,000km, whichever comes first, Mini Warranty for five years or 200,000km, and Mini Roadside Assistance for five years or 200,000km.

This is packaged with free insurance and registration in the first year, complimentary AutoSpa services, plus an exciting chance to win one of three brand-new BMW vehicles.

Gulf region's labour force reaches 31.8mn: GCC-Stat

The data issued by the Statistical Centre for the Cooperation Council for the Arab Countries of the Gulf (GCC-Stat) indicate that the total size of labor force in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries reached 31.8mn workers, which constituted 54.2% of the total population in the GCC countries.

Male workers accounted for 78.7% while females constituted 17.6%. The working citizens in the GCC reached 5.6mn persons, which constituted 23.4% of the total labour force in the GCC countries, with 60% males and 40% females. The statistics disclosed by GCC-Stat also revealed that the number of working women in the GCC Countries increased by 600,000 persons since 2011.

The data indicated that the government sector is still the largest employer of Gulf workers, with a wide scope for localization in the private sector. The percentage of employed citizens working in the public sector reached 83.5% compared to 14.2% in the private sector. Statistics also revealed that GCC Countries' citizens work mainly in the services sector.

H E Pierluigi D'Elia appointed Paganini Ambassador for 2025

The prestigious International Violin Competition 'Premio Paganini' has designated H E Pierluigi D'Elia, Ambassador of Italy to the Sultanate of Oman, as the Paganini Ambassador for 2025. His name was announced by Giovanni Panebianco, President of Premio Paganini.

The official appointment took place in a special ceremony with the presence of guest of honour, Abdullah bin Hamad al Riyami, Chief of Cultural Cooperations Department at the Foreign Ministry, Diplomats and members from the Omani and Italian community.

Founded in 1954, the Premio Paganini is one of the most renowned violin competitions in the world, dedicated to discovering and promoting young violin virtuosos while honouring the legacy of Niccolò Paganini. Over the decades, the competition has been a launchpad for internationally acclaimed artists, including



ing Salvatore Accardo, Gidon Kremer, Leonidas Kavakos, and Sayaka Shoji.

The appointment of H E D'Elia as Paganini Ambassador reflects his commitment to fostering cultural diplomacy and strengthening Italy's rich musical heritage on the international stage. Throughout his diplomatic ca-

reer, Ambassador D'Elia has actively promoted Italian arts, music, and traditions, recognising their role in building bridges between nations.

His appointment aligns with the renewed vision of Premio Paganini to engage global audiences, particularly young musicians, while deepening the

competition's ties with cultural institutions worldwide.

Expressing his gratitude, H E D'Elia stated: "It is a great honour to be named Paganini Ambassador for 2025. Promoting strong cultural cooperation between Italy and Oman, in particular in the field of music, is both a privilege and a responsibility.

NBO, OOMCO strengthen business transactions with integration of B2B solutions

The National Bank of Oman (NBO) has announced the successful integration of its Business-to-Business (B2B) solution with Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO), streamlining business transactions and driving digital transformation in corporate banking.

Abdullah Zahran al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer of NBO, and Tarik Mohammed al Junaidi, Chief Executive Officer of OOMCO signed the agreement at a ceremony held at the NBO Head Office.

This integration enables OOMCO to directly connect its systems with NBO's banking solutions, allowing for automated and secure real-time financial transactions. Not only does this strengthen OOMCO's commitment to innovation but it also positions both organizations at the



forefront of financial technology advancements in Oman.

Mohammed Yahya al Jabri, Assistant General Manager - Head of Global Transaction Banking at NBO, said, "This integration with OOMCO marks a significant step in our commitment to driving digital transformation in corporate banking. By enabling seamless, secure, and

automated transactions, we are enhancing operational efficiency and setting new standards for financial technology in Oman."

The collaboration empowers OOMCO to enhance its operations by reducing processing times and improving financial connectivity with business customers, ultimately boosting the overall efficiency of its services.

Male wing opened at Abu Mudhabi School in Al Wusta governorate

H E Majid bin Said al Bahri, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education for Administrative and Financial Affairs, patronised the opening ceremony of the male wing building at Abu Mudhabi Basic Education School (1-12).

The new wing has been constructed with the support of Petroleum Development Oman (PDO), at a total cost of RO379,768.

This is one of the five other wings established in the governorate, with a total cost of more than RO2mn.

The new building consists of 10 classrooms, a science laboratory, and other facilities such as: administrative rooms, a teachers' hall, a school cafeteria, a queue canopy, a triple playground, in



addition to toilets for students and teachers.

The ceremony was attended by Mohammed bin Ali al Ghafaili, wali of Haima, a number of Their Excellencies and offi-

Director-General of Education in Al Wusta governorate, said, "Today, we celebrate together the opening of this scientific edifice that contributes to providing more educational opportunities

The new wing has been constructed with the support of PDO, at a cost of RO379,768. This is one of the five other wings established in the governorate

cials, and representatives of the supporting company. The ceremony included a number of welcoming segments presented by the school's male and female students.

Majid bin Nasser al Sinawi,

and enhancing the educational infrastructure in the governorate."

He informed that the expansion of the school is part of the Oman Vision 2040 to achieve sustainable development and

enhance the quality of education, while stressing that these efforts constitute a long-term investment for the future generations based on the wise government policy.

The government policy works to create opportunities for private sector institutions to participate effectively in development. The government's approach to educational policy emphasises the need to cooperate with private sector institutions to contribute to the development of the educational process.

"It is under this policy that the leading and established Oman Oil Development Company contributed to the construction of a wing for boys at Abu Mudhabi Basic Education School."



Sohar International launches TSA for Ministry of Finance

As part of its commitment to enhancing financial governance and optimising public expenditure, Sohar International has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Finance (MoF) to officially launch the Treasury Single Account (TSA).

The bank has distinguished itself as a leader in the initiative, demonstrating exceptional efficiency in the development and administration of the TSA framework. Notably, Sohar International remains one of the first financial institutions to have completed the signing and announced the full-scale launch of the TSA initiative in Oman.

Commenting on the announcement, Khalil Salim al Hedaifi, Chief Government and Private Banking Officer at Sohar International, stated that the bank recognises that fiscal prudence and strategic resource allocation are paramount to national economic stability.

"We are, therefore, honoured to collaborate with the Ministry of Finance in shaping a more efficient and dynamic public finance framework," he explained.

"Sohar International's significant progress in the TSA initiative underscores our ability to drive financial innovation with precision. More than just operational execution, this initiative represents a fundamental shift towards greater fiscal discipline and optimised resource utilisation - aligning Oman's financial governance with global best practices," he went on to say.

"By centralising public funds under a unified structure, we are strengthening economic resilience, ensuring seamless financial integration, and reinforcing the sustainability of public expenditure."

The bank has distinguished itself as a leader in the initiative, demonstrating exceptional efficiency in the development and administration of the TSA framework

Sohar International has played a pivotal role in designing a centralised and resilient system that consolidates government accounts under a unified financial structure. This transformative initiative enhances financial oversight, strengthens liquidity management, and reinforces budgetary discipline - ensuring greater transparency and efficiency in public fund utilisation. The bank's leadership in this endeavour reflects its expertise in managing complex financial ecosystems and reaffirms its position as a trusted partner in Oman's economic advancement.

Renaissance Interschool Regatta showcases Oman's young talents

The Renaissance Interschool Regatta 2025 produced excellent sailing, tense racing and offered a glimpse at Oman's future sailing stars as 45 schoolchildren took to the waters of Al Mouj Muscat in their Optimist dinghies.

Brought together from 15 government schools in Muscat, Sur and Mussanah, and part of the Oman Sail Community Sailing Programme, sponsored by Renaissance Services, the sailors all showed how impressive their progress has and how bright their futures could be.

Mohammed al Balushi (Musab bin Al-Zubair Basic Education School, Mussanah) won the boy's event after a close battle with Ibrahim al Maskari (Durat Al-Ajyal Basic Education School, Muscat) who had to settle for second place. Timur al Amri (Durat Al-Ajyal Basic Education School, Muscat) finished third.

In the girl's competition, Mariam al Hadhrami (Al-Safa Basic Education School, Mussanah) won the gold medal ahead of Mariam al Hashar (Sur Basic Education School, Sur) who finished second, with Jameela al Jalboobi (Sur Basic Education School, Sur) finishing third.

Sur Basic Education School ended the regatta as the best performing school. Sailors from the school edged Durat Al-Ajyal Basic Education School, Muscat, into second and the Al-Rawae Basic Education School, Muscat, took the bronze.

Stephen R Thomas, CEO, Renaissance Services, said, "The Renaissance Interschool Regatta is a great opportunity to showcase the benefits of the Community Sailing Program. We are pleased to support these young sailors through this program, which not only teaches them how to sail but also imparts valuable lessons that go beyond the sport. It is encouraging to see so many young people taking an interest in sailing and contributing to Oman's rich maritime traditions."



PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS:	
Muscat	► Al-Raja Basic Education School
► Al-Rawae Basic Education School	► Durat Al-Ma'arifa Basic Education School
► Musab bin Al-Zubair Basic Education School	► Al-Safa Basic Education School
► Durat Al-Ajyal Basic Education School	► Wadam Al-Sahil Basic Education School
► Al-Manhal Basic Education School	
► Sheikh Salem bin Hamood Al-Siyabi Basic Education School	Sur
Mussanah	► Al-Afiyah Basic Education School
► Sur Basic Education School	► Al-Shiraa Basic Education School
► Al-Shars Basic Education School	► Al-Birr Basic Education School
	► Al-Bahjah Basic Education School

Abdul Aziz al Shidi, Oman Sail's Acting Director Sailing, added, "The Interschool Regatta, sponsored by Renaissance Services, is one of the leading youth sports events in Oman, combining competition with a focus on enriching the community."

"Through sport, the sailors learn valuable lessons to take with them on and off the water, and starting with the Community Sailing Program, Oman Sail and Renaissance Services are delighted to create a platform to develop the abilities of young Omanis."

The Oman Sail Community Sailing Program, sponsored by Renaissance Services, has already introduced 301 boys and girls to the sport this year as part of an annual commitment to teach a total of 900 students aged 8-10 from government schools in South Batinah, South Sharqiyah and Muscat governates each year.

Each student takes part in a five-week sailing course with one weekly session on the water using the Optimist boat and participates in a beach clean-up to help keep the environment clean for Oman's native wildlife and marine species - as well as ensuring sailors of all ages and levels can enjoy clean seas.

Operating under Oman Tourism Development Company, Oman Sail is tasked with rekindling the country's maritime eminence, promote the sultanate around the world through sailing, contribute to the sustainable prosperity of the nation and provide long-term learning opportunities for the youth.

Since 2008, Oman Sail has built a solid foundation around Sailing, Tourism, Commerce, Health and Environment, all underpinned with competency-based development for its workforce. Committed to offering both men and women equal opportunities to learn, Oman Sail's programmes focus on nurturing young talent to develop the sailing champions of tomorrow, increasing revenue in the tourism, activity and experiential learning markets and gaining prominent international exposure for the country.

The company has a strong track record in delivering a portfolio of events across the Sultanate to showcase Oman's natural beauty, tourism potential, the people's hospitality, and the infrastructure readiness for business opportunities.



OTE unveils exclusive Ramadan offers across luxury fleet

OTE, the exclusive dealer of Cadillac in Oman, has revealed exclusive limited time offers for Ramadan. Available across a luxurious lineup of sedans and SUVs, customers in Oman can make the most of these attractive offers until April 15, 2025.

Embodying the spirit of Ramadan, OTE is bringing the joy of luxury driving to more automotive enthusiasts with excep-

tional offers on Cadillac's flagship models. Whether it's the iconic Escalade or the sophisticated CT5, customers can enjoy flexible payment plans, benefits, and discounts designed to elevate their ownership experience.

This Ramadan, the Omani community can take advantage of an exclusive offer on select Cadillac models. Customers

purchasing the XT4 will receive a gift voucher of RO200 value, along with first-year registration, window tinting, and 3M polishing, ensuring their vehicle remains pristine.

Those selecting the iconic Escalade will benefit from an RO200 gift voucher, first-year registration, window tinting, 3M polishing, and an extended five-year or 100,000km warranty,

delivering confidence in every drive. Customers can experience these exclusive offers by visiting OTE showrooms in Wattayah, Muscat. For those who prefer a seamless digital experience, Cadillac's Shop.Click.Drive, online showroom provides the same exceptional deals, allowing customers to purchase their dream vehicle from anywhere.

Al Riadah boasts of innovative services

Dhofar Islamic, the Islamic banking window of Bank Dhofar, offers distinguished sharia-compliant banking solutions, delivering personalised services and exclusive benefits to enhance the customer experience.

The Al Riadah account provides customers with priority service for their daily banking transactions through a dedicated team of experienced relationship managers across the bank's 25 branches in Oman.

A wide range of innovative products, services, and exclusive offers has been introduced to simplify banking. The visa signature debit card provides exceptional travel, dining, and shopping benefits, including complimentary access to over 1,000 international airport lounges, free multi-trip travel insurance, and a 24/7 concierge service for booking flights, restaurants, and more.

The World MasterCard credit card features an attractive rewards program, enabling customers to earn points on every transaction and redeem them for cash.

Al Riadah customers enjoy a variety of flexible financing solutions at competitive rates. Options include personal, vehi-



cle, and educational financing with repayment periods of up to ten years. Housing financing is available for up to 25 years, while travel financing, including for hajj and umrah expenses, comes with flexible repayment terms of up to three years.

Opening deposit accounts is quick and straightforward, with

competitive profit rates calculated daily and paid monthly.

Dhofar Islamic just celebrated its tenth anniversary with a rebrand from its previous name, Maisarah. The new logo, depicting a galaxy of stars, symbolises the bank's growth into a dynamic institution.

Health condition of Pope Francis stabilises on day 15 in hospital

Vatican/Istanbul - Pope Francis spent Saturday night calmly after a bronchospasm crisis and related deterioration of his breathing he did not experience another crisis and his condition is stabilising, according to the Vatican.

The Vatican issued a statement late on Saturday about the condition of the 88-year-old spiritual leader of Catholics and head of state of the Vatican, who

has been hospitalised at the Gemelli Hospital in Rome for 15 days due to severe bronchitis he contracted in early February and was diagnosed with bilateral pneumonia.

“The Holy Father’s clinical condition remains stable. He is alternating between non-invasive mechanical ventilation and long periods of supplemental high-flow oxygenation, maintaining a good response to gas



exchange,” it said. The statement said the pope’s hemodynamic parameters remained stable. “He continued to feed and actively cooperated by doing respiratory physiotherapy regularly. He did not have an attack of bronchospasm.”

“The Pope remains in good humour. Today he prayed in the chapel near his hospital room for around twenty minutes,” it added. Jorge Mario Bergoglio

was elected as Pope Benedict XVI’s successor at the age of 76 on March 13, 2013, and took the name Francis. The pontiff has been at the hospital since February 14 and is being treated for double pneumonia.

The Vatican announced February 18 that the pope developed bilateral pneumonia and his clinical condition was complicated. A February 21 statement said doctors indicated Francis’

life was not in danger, although he was not completely out of danger.

One day later, his condition was said to be critical after he suffered an asthma attack.

On February 24, the Vatican stated that although Francis’ health remained critical, slight improvement was observed, and February 25, it described the situation as critical but stable.

Anadolu Agency

Germany: Conservatives scrutinise state support for charitable entities

Berlin, Germany - Over the past few weeks, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to protest against the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) after they voted through proposals for stricter migration policies together with the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party.

By so doing, the demonstrators said, the CDU had torn down the ‘firewall’ between traditional parties and the far right that has long prevailed in Germany. The protests were organised by a range of NGOs such as ‘Omas gegen Rechts’ (Grannies against the Right), the environmental group NABU or ‘München ist bunt’ (Munich is Diverse).

Many of the associations and initiatives involved in the protests are financed not only by donations and member fees but also by state subsidies. Charitable organisations are also eligible for tax breaks.

But legally, their situation is a tightrope walk because they are permitted to be involved in social issues but not to take sides in party politics.

Conservatives question support

Now, if the CDU and CSU are to be believed, some NGOs have violated this principle with their protests. For this reason, the CDU/CSU finance expert, Mathias Middelberg, announced in a newspaper interview in mid-February that he would be ‘very critically’ scrutinising federal support programmes about who was benefiting from them, and



Several NGOs helped organise mass demonstrations against the joint asylum vote by the CDU/CSU and AfD in the Bundestag

Germany’s conservative CDU/CSU bloc is questioning the political neutrality of some NGOs. That could weigh on relations with its potential coalition partners

looking at potentially cutting them altogether.

The conservative bloc is following through on his words. It has put in a parliamentary request for information to the federal government.

It said the request was made because of the protests against the CDU, ‘which were partly organised or supported by charitable associations or state-financed organisations’. The 32-page inquiry contains 551

questions about altogether 17 NGOs.

Political neutrality

In its inquiry, the CDU/CSU parliamentary group refers to an article in the conservative-leaning German daily Welt in which several experts on constitutional law expressed very critical views about the demonstrations.

“Associations that helped organise ‘firewall’ demonstrations did not act on a charitable basis,” argued Volker Boehme-Nessler

from Oldenburg University. “The demonstrations were one-sidedly political. They were directed concretely against one party, the CDU.”

Dietrich Murswiek, a legal expert who taught at Freiburg University until 2016, is of a similar view.

“If a nature conservation group protests that a parliamentary resolution ignored the ‘firewall’, it has nothing to do with its charitable purpose of protecting the environment,” he said.

But Maximilian Schiffer, a political scientist from the Duisburg-Essen University, has a very different take on the precept of political neutrality, which is also a subject of debate in expert circles. “It doesn’t mean that organisations have to be neutral on political issues. They are just not allowed to campaign for a particular party,” he told DW.

According to Schiffer, even the German constitution is not neutral, ‘particularly when human rights, civil liberties, envi-

ronmental and climate protection and the participation in democratic decision-making processes are concerned’. In view of this, civil society organisations did not have to be neutral either, Schiffer said.

The Society for Civil Rights (GFF), which is financed by donations and member fees, is also on the side of those criticising the way the conservatives and the AfD closed ranks for the vote in parliament.

“It is always possible to support democratic principles and objectively examine positions taken by a party that are problematic from the point of view of constitutional law,” it said in a press release.

The GFF stressed that such actions were even desirable to enable the open democratic discourse reflected in the German constitution, or Basic Law.

The organisation Reporters Without Borders (RSF), which fights for press freedom across the world, has been even more explicit in its criticism of the action taken by the CDU/CSU bloc. The director of its German branch, Anja Osterhaus, accused the conservatives of trying to intimidate critical voices from civil society.

Although she conceded that parliamentary inquiries by parties were an important monitoring mechanism, she said it was ‘worrying that the CDU/CSU parliamentary group used this means to demand information on media organisations that are known for their investigative journalism’.

DW

Wildfire in northeast Japan spreads

Tokyo, Japan - Firefighters backed by air support were struggling to put out a raging wildfire in northeastern Japan that is continuing to spread, local media reported on Sunday.

The burned area has expanded to approximately 1,800 hectares due to the raging wildfire in Ofunato city of Iwate prefecture despite days of air and ground operations, the public broadcaster NHK reported.

The country’s disaster management agency asked more fire departments across the country to join the battle against the fire.

Nearly 1,700 firefighters from around 450 departments across the country have already joined the effort to control the blaze, which has spread over five days since Wednesday, according to the Fire and Disaster Management Agency.

The fire has affected wide areas, intensifying in the northern and western areas of central Sanriku-cho Ryoiri, with an expansion of roughly 400 hectares from the previous morning.

An air-and-ground operation



Nearly 1,700 firefighters from around 450 departments across the country have joined the effort to control the blaze

is underway to contain the fires, as smoke billowing from a forest is heading toward areas where houses are located.

Footage aired on NHK showed a Japanese Self-Defence Force helicopter dumping water over one of the multiple locations

in the forested area of Ofunato to help contain the blazes.

Authorities have issued evacuation orders to 4,600 residents of 16 districts as more than 1,200 people have already taken shelter at facilities in the city.

A body believed to be that of

a man was found on Thursday, while at least 84 buildings have been damaged due to the fire.

A full assessment of the destruction is expected to take time, even as firefighting efforts continue.

Anadolu Agency

Micronesia: Activists push for Chuuk islands’ independence

Chuuk islands - The Chuuk islands - a seemingly idyllic spot in the Pacific Ocean, northeast of Indonesia and north of Australia and Papua New Guinea - is one of the four states making up the Federated States of Micronesia, an island nation strategically aligned with the US.

Despite Micronesia’s small population, (around 113,000 in 2024) the island chain allows for control of vast swathes of the Pacific. And its alliance with the US runs deep - Washington provides millions of dollars in assistance every year to help with administration, education and health care as well as meeting other critical needs. But former Chuuk State attorney general Sabino Asor fears Micronesia is too reliant on America.

“I believe our present leaders have developed a culture of dependence, but that gives the US the power to tell us what to do,” he told DW. Asor has spent decades campaigning for Chuuk islands to separate from Mi-



Chuuk islands are home to around 50,000 people

cronesia and become an independent state, though he admits that the population is still very much divided on the issue.

In recent weeks, however, the debate seems to be getting more serious. With the new US administration under President Donald Trump looking to cut costs at every opportunity, Washington appears unconcerned with its global alliances.

Asor thinks that it is only a matter of time before the US

turns its attention to the islands of Micronesia. Then, the decades-long ‘special relationship’, based on the deal known as the Compact of Free Association, could be unceremoniously axed.

“Ideally, if we were independent from the rest of (Micronesia), then we could negotiate our own compact with the US, but we cannot be sure that the US would agree to that,” 66-year-old Asor said.

DW

Hamas accuses Israel of evading obligations under ceasefire deal

Gaza City, Palestine - The Palestinian resistance group Hamas accused Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sunday of evading its obligations under the Gaza ceasefire agreement, calling on mediators to start negotiations for a second phase of the deal.

Israel said early on Sunday that it has agreed to a temporary ceasefire in Gaza during the Muslim month of Ramadan and the Jewish holiday of Passover, following a proposal by US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff.

The move came as Tel Aviv halted the entry of humanitarian aid into the Palestinian enclave, hours after the expiry of the first phase of the Gaza ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement.

"Netanyahu is trying to overturn the signed ceasefire agreement, to serve his narrow political calculations at the expense of the Israeli captives in Gaza," Hamas said in a statement.

"This is a blatant attempt to evade the agreement and avoid entering into negotiations for its second phase," it added.

There was no announcement by the US envoy of the temporary ceasefire arrangement in Gaza.

The Palestinian group called Netanyahu's decision to stop aid to Gaza 'cheap blackmail, a war crime, and a blatant coup against the ceasefire agreement.'

It dismissed Netanyahu's accusation against Hamas of violating the Gaza deal as 'baseless



The Israeli government halted the entry of humanitarian aid into the war-torn Gaza Strip on Sunday, just hours after the expiry of the first phase of a ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal

Israel said early on Sunday that it has agreed to a temporary ceasefire in Gaza during the Muslim month of Ramadan and the Jewish holiday of Passover, following a proposal by US Middle East envoy Steve Witkoff

and misleading allegations aimed at covering up Israel's daily and systematic breaches of the agreement'.

According to the group, over 100 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli army fire in Gaza since the ceasefire deal came into force

on January 19, in addition to blocking humanitarian aid and relief materials into the enclave. Hamas urged mediators to

pressure Israel 'to fulfil its obligations under the agreement and implement the humanitarian protocol by allowing the entry of shelter materials and rescue equipment into Gaza'.

The first six-week phase of the ceasefire agreement, which took effect on January 19, officially ended at midnight on Saturday.

However, Israel has not agreed to move forward to the second phase of the deal to bring an end to the war in Gaza.

Netanyahu had sought to extend the initial exchange phase to secure the release of as many Israeli captives as possible without offering anything in return or fulfilling the military and hu-

manitarian obligations of the agreement.

Hamas has refused to proceed under these conditions, insisting that Israel abide by the terms of the ceasefire and immediately start negotiations for the second phase, which includes a full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and a complete halt to the war.

The ceasefire and prisoner swap agreement has halted Israel's genocidal war on Gaza, which has killed more than 48,380 victims, mostly women and children, and left the enclave in ruins.

Meanwhile, the Israeli government halted the entry of humanitarian aid into the war-torn Gaza Strip on Sunday, just hours after the expiry of the first phase of a ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu's office claimed that the aid was stopped over Palestinian group Hamas' refusal to extend the first phase of the ceasefire agreement.

"As of this morning, entry of all goods and supplies to the Gaza Strip be halted," the office said in a statement.

"If Hamas persists in its refusal, there will be additional consequences," it added without providing any further details.

Israeli Channel 14 said the decision to stop the entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza was coordinated with the US.

Anadolu Agency



Over 80% Japanese back death penalty

Tokyo, Japan - More than 80% Japanese support the death penalty, saying the existence of the system is 'unavoidable', the latest government survey showed.

According to the last year's survey, the support for capital punishment edged up 2.3 percentage points to 83.1% compared to the previous survey in 2019, the proportion calling for its abolition rose a sharper 7.5 points to 16.5%, the Kyodo-based Kyodo News reported on Sunday.

It has been the fifth consecu-

tive time that the support for the death penalty exceeded 80% in the government poll conducted every five years.

Among multiple answers, the most common reason for supporting the death penalty, chosen by 62.2%, was the concern for the feelings of victims of capital crimes and their families.

A total of 55.5% said violent crimes should be paid for with lives, while 53.4% cited concerns that the abolition of the capital punishment would lead to a rise in atrocious crimes.

Anadolu Agency

Egypt rejects attempts to form 'parallel government' in Sudan

Istanbul, Turkey - Egypt announced on Sunday its rejection of any attempt to form a parallel Sudanese government or any action that threatens the unity and sovereignty of Sudan.

"The Arab Republic of Egypt expresses its rejection of any attempts that threaten the unity, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Sudan, including efforts to establish a parallel Sudanese government," the Egyptian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

It further warned that such attempts 'complicate the situation in Sudan, hinder ongoing efforts to unify the visions of Sudanese political forces, and worsen the humanitarian crisis'.

Egypt also urged all Sudanese factions to 'prioritise the country's national interest and engage positively in launching an inclusive political process without exclusion or external interference'.

On February 22, the Sudanese paramilitary group the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), along with



Sudanese political groups and armed movements, signed a political charter in Nairobi, Kenya, to form a parallel government opposing Sudanese authorities.

The Sudanese government protested Kenya's hosting of what it called a 'conspiracy to establish a government' for the RSF.

On February 20, Sudan recalled its ambassador to Nairobi, Kamal Jabara, in protest against Kenya's involvement in discus-

sions aimed at forming a 'parallel government', as announced by the Sudanese Foreign Ministry at the time.

Kenya, however, defended its role, stating that hosting the meetings was part of its efforts to find solutions for ending the war in Sudan in coordination with the UN and the African Union.

Meanwhile, the Sudanese army has been making gains against the RSF in several regions,

including Khartoum, Gezira, White Nile, and North Kordofan.

In Khartoum State, which consists of three cities, the army now controls 90% of Bahri in the north, most of Omdurman in the west, and 60% of Khartoum city, where the presidential palace and international airport are located.

However, the RSF still maintains positions in the eastern and southern neighbourhoods of Khartoum.

UK, France to work with Kyiv

London, UK - British Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced that the UK and France will work with Ukraine to develop a peace plan, which will be presented to the US.

The agreement follows discussions between Starmer, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, and French President Emmanuel Macron.

Speaking to BBC's Laura Kuenssberg, Starmer expressed optimism, calling the agreement 'a step in the right direction'.

He added that the plan, aimed at ending the conflict, would be presented to Washington.

Starmer also suggested that the US, alongside European nations, would play a pivotal role in ensuring Ukraine's security.

He emphasised that key components of the proposed peace plan include a strong Ukraine with defensive capabilities to deter Russian aggression, a 'US backstop', and security guarantees from European countries.

These elements, according to Starmer, are crucial for a 'lasting peace' in Ukraine.

"The components of a lasting peace are clear: a strong Ukraine that can defend itself, European security guarantees, and a US backstop," Starmer said. "That's the package. All three parts need to be in place, and that's what I'm working hard to bring together."

Second wave of efficiency emails sent to US federal employees

Washington, D.C., US - A second wave of emails requiring US federal employees to report their weekly activities began circulating, as part of a government-wide efficiency drive led by billionaire Elon Musk.

The emails, obtained by The Hill website, instruct employees to summarise their weekly tasks in five bullet points.

"Please do not send links, attachments, or any classified/sensitive information. If all of your activities are classified or sensitive, please write 'All of my activities are sensitive'," the email said late on Friday.



The initiative, overseen by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), aims to reduce spending and improve productivity across federal agencies.

Employees must complete the task 'every' Monday by midnight US Eastern Time (0400GMT Tuesday).

Musk addressed the mandate in a social media post: "The President (Donald Trump) has made it clear that this is mandatory for the executive branch. Anyone working on classified or other sensitive matters is still required to respond if they receive the email but can simply reply that

their work is sensitive."

DOGE, established earlier this year, has been tasked with identifying inefficiencies and reducing wasteful spending.

During the first wave of emails, however, several agencies, including the Justice Department, FBI and the Pentagon, instructed employees to ignore Musk's request.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) - the government's human resources department - has since directed agencies to handle the matter internally, leaving decisions to individual departments.

37 people killed in Bolivia bus crash

Sucre, Bolivia - At least 37 people lost their lives, and 39 others were injured in a bus crash in Bolivia's Potosi region, Al Jazeera reported, citing police and local officials' statements.

The accident occurred around 7am local time on Saturday on the road between Uyuni and Colchani. Authorities said one of the buses veered into the opposite lane, leading to the collision.

Uyuni is the gateway to the Salar de Uyuni, a major tourist attraction and the world's largest salt flat at more than 10,000sqkm (3,900sq miles), as per Al Jazeera.

Speaking to reporters, a spokesperson for the Departmental Police Command of Potosi stated: "As a result of this fatal accident, we have 39 people injured in four hospitals in the town of Uyuni, and 37 people have lost their lives."

Police personnel are working to identify people who were killed and those who were injured and hospitalised, the spokesperson added.

One of the buses was travelling to Oruro, where a major carnival celebration was underway. Authorities suspect that one of the drivers, who survived the crash, had been drinking before the accident. Passengers reportedly saw him consuming alcohol.

ANI

Ukrainians react to row between Trump, Zelensky at White House

Kyiv, Ukraine - Most Ukrainians have been closely following President Volodymyr Zelensky's visit to Washington, where Ukraine and the US were to sign an agreement on minerals. From the American side, it was supposed to pave the way for negotiations on peace in Ukraine. But a row between Zelensky and US President Donald Trump and Vice President J D Vance turned everything on its head.

Volodymyr Viatrovykh, a deputy from the Ukrainian political party European Solidarity, believes that Zelensky defended the truth about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine with a clear message: Who started the war, who is to blame and who is the aggressor. However, the White House was in no mood to hear these truths.

"Trump and Vance have lied about the war and wanted Zelensky to publicly accept this lie," Vjatrovych wrote on Facebook. "It is good that this did not happen, because truth is one of the most important components of war. Of course, we also need American weapons to be able to fight, but we also need the truth to understand what we are fighting for." His party colleague, parliamentarian Oleksiy Honcharenko, on the other hand, criticised Zelensky's behaviour on Telegram, speaking of 'horror' and an 'end to relations with Trump'.

Support for Zelensky was expressed by his closest associates, including the head of the President's Office Andriy Yermak, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko



After the public row with Donald Trump, there is a lot of support for Volodymyr Zelensky, but also criticism. Some Ukrainians have started collecting money for a nuclear rearmament of their country

Trump and Vance have lied about the war and wanted Zelensky to publicly accept this lie. It is good that this did not happen

VOLODYMYR VIATROVYCH

and head of the governing party Servants of the People David Arakhamia. They all emphasised the need for real security guarantees for Ukraine.

"Security means life, a future without sirens, without losses, without fear for those we love. Without real guarantees, war will come back. It always returns to where opportunities for a new at-

tack are left open," Andriy Yermak wrote on Telegram, thanking the American people for their support of Ukraine. Also on Telegram, Denys Shmyhal wrote that the Ukrainian president is right when he says that peace is impossible without security guarantees. "This is a threat to the entire European continent," the Ukrainian prime minister said.

'Shifts in geopolitics'

After what happened in Washington, not only the US and Russia, but also Ukraine would have to sit at the negotiating table to end the war in the future, according to Serhiy Herasymchuk from the research centre Foreign Policy Council - Ukrainian Prism. "Europe will now also sit at the table, because Europe has largely sided with one side," he told DW. With a few exceptions, European heads of state and government unanimously expressed their support for Zelensky.

Neither the Kremlin nor the White House can ignore this, the expert believes.

At the same time, Herasymchuk expects the meeting to lead to 'tectonic shifts in the perception of the United States' worldwide, though does not rule out that some European countries will take a wait-and-see attitude.

Some Southeast Asian countries may conclude that Washington is a risky partner for them, 'that it is better to voluntarily find common ground with China than to wait until it comes to a confrontation in which the US will not support them'.

Others, like Ukraine, would try to fight, the expert said. "I hope that the European Union and Ukraine will achieve positive re-

sults together in this fight," he emphasised, noting that Zelensky's quarrel with Trump and Vance had triggered a strong European response. Europe should soon present clear messages of support for Ukraine and concrete measures, he said.

At the same time, Herasymchuk fears that the US could now refuse to provide military aid to Ukraine - though he adds that the NATO allies could prevent this.

Meanwhile, on social media, Ukrainians are arguing about how Zelensky was received at the White House and whether he behaved correctly there.

DW

India: Avalanche death toll goes up to five

Chamoli, India - Body of one more person missing in the avalanche that hit near Mana village in the Chamoli district of Uttarakhand on February 28 has been recovered by the Army, an official said on Sunday.

With this the death toll in the avalanche has gone up to five and rescuers are continuing efforts to trace the remaining three missing individuals.

The body recovered today is being brought to Mana post as per PRO (Defence), Dehradun.

The search and rescue operation for the missing workers is ongoing, with multiple forces, including the Army, ITBP, Air Force, NDRF, and SDRF, working collaboratively to provide assistance, Uttarakhand chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said



The Drone-Based Intelligent Buried Object Detection System brought to Joshimath will now be sent to the avalanche site in Mana, in Joshimath on Sunday (ANI)

this morning. He added that ground-penetrating radar, thermal imaging cameras, and victim-locating cameras are being utilised to locate the missing.

He mentioned that weather conditions in the area are improving, but the possibility of avalanches remains high, prompting authorities to halt

work in high-altitude areas as a precaution.

Chamoli District Magistrate, Sandeep Tiwari, said earlier on Sunday: "Yesterday, doctors

have confirmed four deaths. Earlier, the total number was 55, but now we have the information that one of the workers was on unauthorised leave, and he is home. The total number has been reduced to 54, out of which four people are still missing..."

According to Indian Air Force officials, a Mi-17 helicopter airlifted the drone-based Intelligent Buried Object detection system for search operations today in the avalanche-affected areas in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district.

IAF Cheetah helicopters have been engaged in rescue operations in the Mana area of Chamoli since Saturday in the avalanche that happened at the BRO camp near Mana village in Joshimath on February 28.

ANI



US President Donald Trump

Trump signs order making English the official US language

Washington, D.C., US - US President Donald Trump signed an executive order on Saturday to make English the official language of the nation.

Trump said in his order that English has been used as the national language since its founding and it is long past time it is declared as the official language of the country.

"Speaking English not only opens doors economically, but it helps newcomers engage in their communities, participate in national traditions, and give back to our society," said Trump.

The order rescinds a 25-year-old order from former President Bill Clinton that required federal agencies and other groups that receive federal funding to provide language assistance to non-English speakers. The move is expected to hurt immigrant communities and those looking for assistance learning English, according to advocacy groups.

Trump, however, said it is in the US' best interest to designate

English as the official language to promote unity and ensure consistency in government operations, and create a pathway to civic engagement. "Establishing English as the official language will not only streamline communication but also reinforce shared national values, and create a more cohesive and efficient society," he said.

Within hours of assuming office in January, the Trump administration shut down the Spanish-language version of the White House website and social media accounts.

Spanish is the US' second-most spoken language, a reflection of the nation's strong Latino community. Some 62% of people who speak a language other than English at home in the US speak Spanish, according to a 2022 report from the US Census Bureau.

Trump's order comes as he continues his crackdown on migration to the US, which has seen thousands of migrants, primarily from Latin America, deported.

Namibia bids farewell to founding father Sam Nujoma

Windhoek, Namibia - Sam Nujoma, the guerilla leader who led Namibia to independence from South Africa, was buried on Saturday, with numerous foreign leaders and dignitaries in attendance.

His funeral took place at Heroes' Acre, a memorial outside the capital, Windhoek, dedicated to those who died in the country's struggle for freedom.

Nujoma died on February 8, aged 95, triggering nearly a month of homage during which his body was transported the full length of the country before lying in state on Friday.

'Most distinguished son of the soil'

Several African leaders, including South African President Cyril



Ramaphosa and former President Thabo Mbeki, ex-Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete, Angola's Joao Lourenco and Emmerston Mnangagwa from Zimbabwe, attended the burial at the Heroes' Acre, alongside thousands of normal Namibians.

In opening remarks at the cer-

emony, Namibia's President Nangolo Mbumba called Nujoma 'the most distinguished son of the soil' and a 'giant' among leaders.

"You were the ultimate statesman," he said, adding: "May your legacy become a source of strength as we con-

tinue to uphold your command of maintaining unity of purpose."

"We fought under your command, ... won the liberation struggle, and forever removed apartheid colonialism from the face of Namibia," Mbumba said.

From railway sweeper to president

Nujoma, born the eldest of 10 children, first worked as a railway sweeper.

However, the night classes he attended simultaneously led to a political awakening, and he joined Black workers in Windhoek in the late 1950s to resist an order from the South Africa-led government to move to a new township.

In 1960, while in exile, he was elected as head of the South

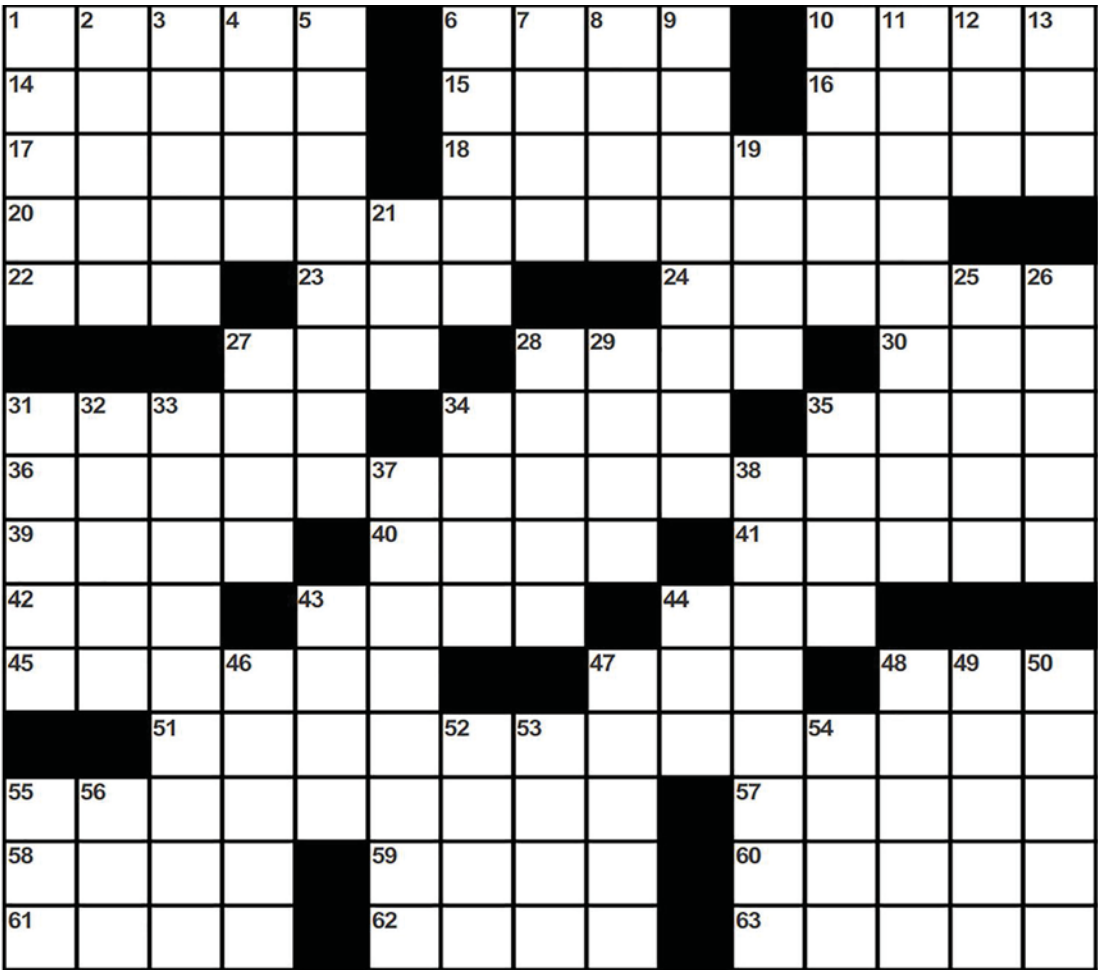
West People's Organization (SWAPO), which six years later began an armed struggle against apartheid South Africa after it refused a UN order to give up its mandate over Namibia, a former German colony.

After independence was achieved, Nujoma became president in 1990 and remained in the post for three terms until 2005, a time during which the country experienced relative prosperity and political stability.

However, he faced criticism over his intolerant attitude toward media coverage critical of his person, his vehement rejection of homosexuality and a constitutional amendment in 1998 allowing him to run for a third term.

DW

DAILY CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 1) Cinematic turkeys
 - 6) William the Conqueror's burial place
 - 10) Nasty guy
 - 14) Farewell
 - 15) Fashion magnate Gucci
 - 16) Manitoba tribe
 - 17) "Blue" singer Rimes
 - 18) Ticket for a makeup game
 - 20) Start of a woman-approved quip
 - 22) Singer Difrancio
 - 23) Shipping co.
 - 24) Made uniform
 - 27) Dude kin
 - 28) Elroy Jetson's mom
 - 30) Caesar's 1,011
 - 31) Negatively charged particle
 - 34) Shoots the breeze
 - 35) Adam's boy
 - 36) Middle of a womanapproved quip
 - GIRLS IN CHARGE
 - 39) Cosmetics giant
 - 40) Air freshener scent
 - 41) Ship of fuels?
 - 42) Prohibit, as a pesticide
 - 43) Monthly expense, for some
 - 44) Larry King worked
- DOWN**
- 1) Model-maker's wood
 - 2) Music hall
 - 3) City on Biscayne Bay
 - 4) "Well done!" in Italy
 - 5) Overexposed, in a way (Var.)
 - 6) Marathoners' prerace intake
 - 7) Jai _ (court game)
 - 8) Falco of "The Sopranos"
 - 9) "You must be kidding!"
 - 10) Earthy hue
 - 11) Anti-takeover maneuver
 - 12) Kind of center
 - 13) Cartoon squeal
 - 19) Hibernation site
 - 21) Mil. address
 - 25) Drive out
 - 26) Thanksgiving guest
 - 27) Beethoven's birthplace
 - 28) Pleasure trip
 - 29) Having the necessary power
 - 31) Addis_ (Ethiopia's capital)
 - 32) Some old Chevy models
 - 33) Smelting locale
 - 34) Winner's look
 - 35) It can be doubled on a face
 - 37) Unfolded
 - 38) Pondered
 - 43) Architect Mies van der _
 - 44) Subway unit
 - 46) Seal's kin
 - 47) Corpulent 1980 Dom DeLuise comedy?
 - 48) Longtime Chicago Symphony conductor
 - 49) Air-race marker
 - 50) For_ (cheaply)
 - 52) "Julius Caesar" setting
 - 53) Eats late
 - 54) Type of tie or knife
 - 55) Mustangs school, briefly
 - 56) Western defense grp.

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE

ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

After dealing with someone else's secrets lately, you're all warmed up to deal with your own. Right? Well, if you're not, the least you can do for yourself is to find someone you not only trust implicitly but whose advice and counsel you know in your heart is solid and reliable. The tough part is you're usually the person everyone else turns to for just those things. Someone had to teach you those traits, though. Call them.

LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

When times are tough, or at least tricky, the Universe often sends hints your way via coincidental circumstances, vivid or recurring dreams, or the appearance or reappearance of someone whose presence makes you feel a certain way. It's up to you now to figure out what those coincidences and dreams are all about. You know you can do it. If anyone is an expert at unraveling such things for others, it's you.

SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You do love to chat. There's no arguing that fact. But the one thing you actually love more is taking action. So now that you can see the possibility of making a positive change happen, you're eager to not just talk about it but do something about it. If you'll be acting with a partner and they're doing more talking than planning, see what you can do to get the show on the road. Otherwise, you may have to undertake a solo venture.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What city is the subject of "The Book of the City of Ladies" (finished 1405)?

A. The perfect city between the clouds in "The Birds" by Aristophanes
B. The city formed by the book itself
C. Cockayne
D. The Garden of the Hesperides

2. Someone is unsuccessfully trying to look well-dressed is said to be "dressed up like a" what?

A. Budge's dessert
B. Elephant's breakfast
C. Dog's dinner
D. Gerbil's lunch

3. In 1577, Francis Drake embarked on a voyage around the world with 5 ships. After 3 years, which was the only one to return to England?

A. The Endeavour
B. Santa Maria
C. The Golden Hind
D. The Discovery

Answers: 1.B 2.C 3.C

TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

When it comes time to tell someone a secret, most people who know you turn to you for a few reasons. First, it takes quite a bit to shock you. Second, you're completely trustworthy and quite wise. When a sibling or neighbor approaches you now with that look on their face, you'll know immediately what's needed. Invite them in, make some coffee, and put away the phone. This could take a while.

VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

Sometimes you have to believe, you know, have a little faith. Scientists provide us with a lot of answers, but you of all people know there's more to life than what science has to offer. And with your intuition, you know that when you believe in something it's probably true. So when someone unusual comes along with a message, take a step away from your apparent reality and listen to them.

CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

You've decided to give yourself exactly what you need, which might be a change of scenery and some new people and experiences to enjoy. Still, you're duty-bound to make sure everything at home will run without a hitch in your absence. So before you board that plane or hop in your car, be sure the person you trust most is in charge of everything. You won't be able to enjoy yourself or concentrate on the task at hand if you don't.

GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

You'd much rather spend money than keep track of it. In your mind, that's what bank statements are for, and that's why the heavens invented accountants. At the moment, however, you may need to take stock of some finances yourself. If you're not fond of numbers, you won't have a good time, so give yourself some incentive to get through this, a reward you absolutely can't have until the project is done. No cheating.

LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

Relationships are complicated. There's just no way they can't be. So when someone comes along who's very different, you often spend more time than you probably should worrying about those differences instead of concentrating on all the wonderful things you have in common. Someone special in your life could well end up being there for a good long while. Focus on the positives.

AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

The best part of socializing with your peers is that you often run into people who are on the same career path or on paths that necessarily cross every now and then. You've had several encounters along those lines lately, and it's just dawned on you that one of them might be mutually beneficial. Give them a call and see if they're on the same page. You bet they are, or they'll know someone who is.

CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

Every so often you wake up and find yourself smack in the middle of a day when everyone seems to be out for one thing and one thing only: to be pleasant to each other, which is the way you are every day. It doesn't happen often, but when it does your peaceful soul just loves it. This is one of those days. For the first time in a while you may actually feel as if you're living on a planet with kindred spirits.

SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

For some reason, you've been thinking a lot lately about either going back to school on a regular basis or just taking a class or two that will add to your already impressive resume. Of course, anything you can do to add to your skills is a good idea, but if you happen to be in the mood to do it, so much the better. So while you have both the enthusiasm and a good reason to do it, why not at least investigate?

PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

Being brazen has its advantages. First of all, it's extremely appealing to prospective suitors and an absolute magnet for friends. It's fire, and whether it's in a fireplace or a person's attitude doesn't matter. That famously hypnotic quality is still there. Someone who wants to woo you for a variety of reasons will show you more than a little bit of fire right now, and you'll find it quite appealing. Play the game, though.

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

G	O	N	O
R	I	I	O
M	I	D	T
A	R	S	M

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

SOLUTION

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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



Jose Mourinho

Mourinho’s four-match ban halved after appeal

Ankara, Turkey - Fenerbahce manager Jose Mourinho’s four-match suspension has been halved by the Turkish Football Federation (TFF) following a review of the club’s appeal.

Mourinho was handed a fine and the ban over his comments about Turkish referees after a game at rivals Galatasaray, where he criticised the match officials in a press conference following the 0-0 Super Lig draw on Monday.

The TFF fined the 62-year-old Portuguese 1.6 million Turkish lira (\$43,963.89) but that was reduced to 558,500.

The penalties were due to “derogatory and offensive statements towards the Turkish referee” and accusations of chaos and disorder in Turkish football, according to the TFF.

The TFF said Mourinho’s remarks violated sports ethics, promoted violence and disorder and could incite fan incidents.

Monday’s game was refereed by Slovenian Slavko Vincic after both clubs requested a foreign official take charge.

Fenerbahce issued a statement on Tuesday defending Mourinho.

LAST-GASP BILLING RESCUES NAPOLI

Conte’s men snatch late draw to stay hot on the heels of Inter

Naples, Italy - Napoli substitute Philip Billing rescued a deserved 1-1 draw at home to Serie A leaders Inter Milan on Saturday, leaving the title rivals separated by a point at the top of the table.

Federico Dimarco put defending champions Inter ahead in the 22nd minute with a superb free kick to silence the capacity crowd but Danish midfielder Billing was the hero of Naples, coming off the bench to equalise in the 87th minute.

Inter have 58 points with Napoli on 57, two ahead of Atalanta who were held to a 0-0 draw by Venezia on Saturday.

After a nervy, scrappy start from both sides at the Diego Armando Maradona Stadium, with the game repeatedly interrupted as players received treatment, it was only fitting that the opening goal came from a set-piece.

Dimarco curled his free kick around the wall and inside the far post. Napoli goalkeeper Alex Meret could only look on as the ball nestled in the corner of the net and the game finally erupted into life. Once Napoli absorbed the sucker-punch, they began to push forward in search of an equaliser. A long pass was met first time by striker Romelu Lukaku but his effort smashed



Napoli’s Philip Billing celebrates after scoring against Inter Milan on Saturday

into the side netting.

Seconds later Giacomo Raspadori’s first touch took him past Inter keeper Josep Martinez wide in the area but his second was too heavy and the ball rolled wide with Lukaku waiting in the middle of the area. Just before the break Raspadori managed to get the ball into a dangerous position but Lukaku’s strike from the edge of the six-yard box was blocked by Alessandro Bastoni and Inter held their lead going into the interval.

Napoli were camped out in the Inter area for much of the second half, forcing corner after corner. Stanislav Lobotka fired over from the edge of the area after a one-two with Lukaku.

Scott McTominay then had a powerful strike parried away by Martinez, while an Inter counter-attack needed Meret to come well out of his area and clear the danger with Denzel Dumfries bearing down on the Napoli goal.

Napoli were looking to put a dismal February behind them where a run of three draws and one defeat had allowed Inter to steal top spot, but they looked set to slip further behind until manager Antonio Conte sprang Billing from the bench.



Manchester City’s Nico O’Reilly celebrates his goal against Plymouth Argyle on Saturday

O'Reilly stars as Man City rally to beat Plymouth

Manchester, England - Manchester City survived an FA Cup scare for the second round in succession as they beat Championship strugglers Plymouth Argyle 3-1 to reach the quarter-finals on Saturday.

Teenager Nico O’Reilly saved City’s blushes with two headed goals after Ukrainian Maksym Talovierov had sent thousands of visiting fans into delirium by heading Plymouth into the lead.

Both his goals were set up by Kevin de Bruyne, who added a late third goal to finish off the south-coast side.

While Plymouth were unable to emulate their shock victory over Premier League leaders Liverpool in the fourth round, City will now be big favourites to win the Cup for

the third time under Pep Guardiola and salvage something from the season.

City also had to come from behind to beat third-tier Leyton Orient in the previous round.

“We know how important it is. Now we are going to fight, and we’re going to see what happens,” Guardiola said.

O’Reilly headed home a De Bruyne delivery in first-half stoppage time and City laid siege to Plymouth’s goal in the second period before O’Reilly again was in the right place to head De Bruyne’s corner into the net in the 76th minute.

“Two goals from left back, I wasn’t really expecting that,” 19-year-old O’Reilly, who also scored in the 8-0 win over Salford City in the third round.

‘We can play for the Scudetto until the end’

Naples, Italy - Napoli’s performance in Saturday’s 1-1 draw against leaders Inter Milan in their top of the table clash has shown they can fight for the Serie A title, manager Antonio Conte said.

Conte’s side risked falling further behind in the Scudetto race having surrendered first place to Inter last weekend but a late Philip Billing goal kept Napoli a point off the pace.

“This match was important not only for the standings, but also for a matter of personality,” Conte told reporters.

“With 11 games to go, being one point from the top must make us understand that, despite the difficulties, if we want, we can play for the Scudetto until the end.

“This is the message that must be clear, first of all to ourselves, then to the outside.”

Napoli were a goal down at the break and salvaged a draw three minutes from time but will possibly feel they should have beaten Inter after outplaying their rivals in the second half.

“We all would have signed up to be in this position at this point of the season,” Conte said.

Inter are a top team, built over time and difficult to beat,” he added of the reigning champions. “Having shown that we can stand up to them and, for long stretches, having even been superior, must give us great confidence.”

It was the perfect response after the disappointment of Napoli’s 2-1

Having shown that we can stand up to them and, having even been superior, must give us great confidence

ANTONIO CONTE

defeat at Como last Sunday and the manager wants to see more of the same until the end of the season.

“This must give us confidence and make us understand if we are this, or that of the lacklustre second half in Como, which I have not tolerated all week,” Conte said. “Having put in this performance in this way must give us a lot of confidence and at the same time we must understand that if we want to, we can.

“Wanting means working and pedalling more than others. Our goal is to stay united to continue being an annoyance until the end.”

Mateta suffers serious injury after ‘reckless challenge’

London, England - Crystal Palace suffered a big blow as forward Jean-Philippe Mateta was taken to hospital with a head injury after a rash challenge by Millwall goalkeeper Liam Roberts during their FA Cup fifth-round clash at Selhurst Park on Saturday.

Premier League Palace won 3-1 to secure a quarter-final spot but their progress was marred by Mateta’s injury. Palace chairman Steve Parish described Roberts’s challenge on the 27-year-old Frenchman as the most reckless he had ever seen and said Mateta’s ear was badly gashed.

Mateta was chasing a long pass towards Millwall’s goal in the seventh minute when Roberts came rushing out and attempted to clear the bouncing ball but was high and wild and

clattered the Palace player, kicking him on the side of the head.

After a VAR check, Roberts was shown a red card while Mateta received several minutes of attention on the pitch and was given oxygen before being taken to an ambulance and on to hospital, suffering from concussion.

Mateta has been in superb form for Palace, with 15 goals from 33 appearances in all competitions this season.

After the game Palace manager Oliver Glasner offered an update on Mateta’s condition.

“He’s at hospital now and has a serious ear injury,” he said. “I think he will definitely miss the Ipswich game (on March 8), but I still hope that he’s available for the quarter-finals of the FA Cup at the end of March.”

Crystal Palace’s Jean-Philippe Mateta needed 25 stitches in his left ear after a rash challenge by Millwall goalkeeper Liam Roberts

Alonso happy with Leverkusen’s performance

Frankfurt, Germany - Bayer Leverkusen manager Xabi Alonso hailed his side’s 4-1 win at Eintracht Frankfurt in the Bundesliga on Saturday as the ideal tune-up for next week’s mouth-watering Champions League last-16 showdown with title rivals Bayern Munich.

Leverkusen were never threatened by Frankfurt after a seven-minute blitz in the first half saw them score three goals and, apart from a defensive blunder, they had control of the match.

Leverkusen now prepare for Wednesday’s Champions League first-leg clash at Bayern, who lead them in the Bundesliga race by nine points after Friday’s 3-1 win at VfB Stuttgart.



Isco of Real Betis celebrates with teammates after scoring against Real Madrid on Saturday

BETIS THE MENACE

Seville, Spain - Real Madrid slumped to a 2-1 defeat at Real Betis after their former player Isco converted a second-half penalty on Saturday, denying the visitors the chance to top LaLiga.

Atletico Madrid took full advantage of Real's slip and climbed into provisional top spot with a 1-0 home win over Athletic Bilbao.

The loss leaves Real Madrid level on 54 points with Barcelona, who host mid-table Real Sociedad on Sunday.

"I'm dead, exhausted. In the end it's very hard to win games against Madrid, who have millions of resources, it's very difficult," Isco, named man of the match, told Movistar. "I'm happy for the win against the best team out there today. Hopefully we can finish the year in the best possible way."

Madrid dominated the early proceedings and took the lead after 10 minutes when Brahim Diaz tapped in Ferland Mendy's pass from the left after a great through ball from Kylian

Mbappe.

Betis overcame the sluggish start, though, and equalised in the 34th through Johnny Cardoso's close-range header off a corner from Isco.

Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois pulled off a crucial save to deny Cardoso a second goal shortly before halftime.

Real Madrid miss chance to go top with 2-1 defeat at Betis

The Belgian, however, could not prevent Isco from scoring a clinical spot kick to hand Betis the lead nine minutes after the break following Antonio Rudiger's foul on Jesus Rodriguez.

Madrid boss Carlo Ancelotti sought to spark some life into his attack with the introduction of Arda Guler and Endrick, but Betis' backline held firm while goalkeeper Adrian blocked a late attempt from Vinicius Jr.

"We started off a bit off the pace, letting them play too

much and they hurt us. But the team improved halfway through the first half," the 32-year-old Isco said.

"I am always grateful to Madrid for having helped me fulfil all the dreams a child has and I will always have Madrid in my heart," he added, having won five Champions League

trophies, three LaLiga titles and the Copa del Rey with the club. Betis now have 38 points and are in sixth spot, the final European qualifying berth.

Coach Carlo Ancelotti warned Real Madrid must raise their game ahead of the Champions League Round of 16.

Ancelotti criticised his team's poor performance at the Benito Villamarin stadium and said a similar display at home to Atletico in Tuesday's Champions League first leg could prove

costly.

"This is a heavy blow, we have to bounce back. Losing at this point in the season is tough because everyone is on form and we didn't do well in this game," the Italian told reporters.

"We lost 27 balls in the first half and Betis got back into the game. If we play like this, we certainly won't win on Tuesday.

"I hope this serves as a wake-up call. It seemed that lately we were more organised, more compact, and today we weren't able to do it like in the previous games."

Ancelotti explained his decision to bring on Endrick for the team's top scorer Kylian Mbappe in the closing stages of the game, saying the French forward had been unable to fully train due to a dental issue.

"(Mbappe) had a problem this week and didn't train much and wasn't at his best level," he said. "To avoid problems I took him off and put Endrick on, who has been in good form," Ancelotti added of the Brazilian teenager.

Alvarez goal propels Atletico to top spot

Madrid, Spain - Atletico Madrid climbed into provisional top spot in LaLiga with a battling 1-0 home win over Athletic Bilbao on Saturday thanks to a second-half strike from substitute Julian Alvarez.

Diego Simeone's side top LaLiga with 56 points, two clear of Barcelona, who host Real Sociedad on Sunday, and third-placed Real Madrid, who lost 2-1 at Real Betis on Saturday.

Atletico stay fourth on 48 points.

Atletico came close to taking the lead in the first half through Alexander Sorloth, who missed a header from Antoine Griezmann's pass and again from Giuliano Simeone's cross.

Before the break the Norway striker tried another header from Nahuel Molina's cross but failed to convert once more.

Nico and Inaki Williams also came close for the visitors, but the brothers could not find the back of Jan Oblak's net.

Alvarez, who came on for Sorloth just before the hour mark, eventually scored the winner in the 66th minute with a precise left-foot shot after being played through by Marcos Llorente.

Bilbao never gave up and almost equalised in the dying minutes when substitute Gorka Guruzeta met Yuri Berchiche's cross in the centre of the box but his shot flew wide.

"A very important victory," said Alvarez. "We knew it wasn't going to be easy. We're up there



Atletico Madrid's Julian Alvarez celebrates his goal against Athletic Bilbao on Saturday

We knew it wasn't going to be easy. We're up there and we're in the fight. We had a lot of chances. We had to score and luckily the goal came

JULIAN ALVAREZ

and we're in the fight. We had a lot of chances. We had to score and luckily the goal came.

"I feel very comfortable. My teammates have helped me a lot, the people give me all their affec-

tion," added the forward who joined Atleti from Manchester City in the close season.

"The important thing is the team and we're still in the fight (for the title)."



'We have to focus on Champions League showdown with Real'

Madrid, Spain - Atletico Madrid coach Diego Simeone urged his players to quickly switch focus onto their Champions League clash with Real Madrid rather than getting carried away with Saturday's 1-0 home win over Athletic Bilbao that provisionally lifted them to the top of LaLiga.

Atletico face Real in the first leg of the Champions League last-16 in a mouth-watering Madrid derby, something Simeone is wary of despite his team's good form.

"We have a big game in the Champions League and at the moment we just have to focus on that and get well rested during these three days off," Simeone

said. "What we have to do at the moment is continue to strengthen the collective work of the players and not lose that focus."

Simeone also hailed substitute Julian Alvarez, who sealed the victory. "Today we faced a very difficult opponent. They defended well and had some chances with Nico and Inaki Williams. We were lucky to have Julian in the second half and for him to finish the counter-attack the way he did," he said.

Sluggish start to Van Persie's Feyenoord job

Rotterdam, Netherlands - Robin van Persie made a disappointing debut as coach of Feyenoord as they were held to a goalless draw at home by NEC Nijmegen in the Eredivisie on Saturday.

Van Persie was named last weekend as new coach of Feyenoord after last month's sacking of the Dane Brian Priske.

The 41-year-old Van Persie's storied playing career began and ended at Feyenoord and he received a warm welcome on his return to De Kuip, where had been a youth team coach until the end of last season, when he left for a first head coach job at Hereenveen.

Feyenoord paid to get back Van Persie, who also played at Arsenal and Manchester United and scored a record 50 goals in 102 appearances for the Netherlands.

The draw left Feyenoord fourth in the standings.



Robin van Persie



Paris St Germain's Bradley Barcola celebrates his goal against Lille on Saturday

First-half blitz helps PSG thrash Lille

Paris, France - Paris St Germain continued their march towards the Ligue 1 title with a 4-1 win over fifth-placed Lille on Saturday, scoring all four goals in a first half that saw the visitors overwhelmed.

The capital club have 62 points from 24 matches and a 16-point lead over both Olympique de Marseille, who host Nantes on Sunday, and third-placed Nice after they won 3-1 at St Etienne.

PSG's waves of attacks forced Lille goalkeeper Lucas

Now we have to think about the... two games against Liverpool, think about recovering and be ambitious

LUIS ENRIQUE

Chevalier into several saves as he tried to stem the tide.

Bradley Barcola scored the home side's first goal after six minutes pouncing on a rebound

after a Chevalier save from Ousmane Dembele and from there it just got worse for Lille.

Marquinhos doubled the lead in the 22nd, scrambling the ball over the line past the Lille defence while six minutes later Dembele added a third to all but wrap up the points. In the 37th minute, Desire Doue completed the first-half scoring with a brilliant strike from a tight angle, leaving Lille with little to play for but pride after the restart.

Both sides created chances in the second half and 10 minutes

from time Jonathan David got a consolation for Lille, who stay on 41 points, two behind fourth-placed AS Monaco.

"It's the best first half of the season," PSG coach Luis Enrique told reporters. "Now we have to think about the... two games against Liverpool, think about recovering and be ambitious."

"They're the most in-form team in Europe, both in terms of results and the way they play. It could have been a Champions League final, so we're going to try and play to our strengths."

VARUN CLIPS KIWIS' WINGS

Spinner takes five wickets as India beat New Zealand to top group

Dubai, UAE - Varun Chakravarthy's spin masterclass and Shreyas Iyer's pressure-defying fifty helped India script a 44-run win over New Zealand on Sunday to top Group A, setting up the semifinal against Australia in the Champions Trophy.

Iyer made a composed 79 off 98 balls

under pressure but New Zealand, led by pacer Mark Henry (5/42), managed to stifle India to an under-par 249 for nine.

Chasing 250 was not a tall order for New Zealand's capable batting unit but they struggled against India's spin quartet led by Chakravarthy (5/42) to be all out for 205 in 45.3 overs.

Kane Williamson's gritty 81 went in vain. India will face Australia, who finished second in Group B, in the first semifinal here on Tuesday while the Kiwis play South Africa in the other semifinal in Lahore on Wednesday.

As they have been doing throughout this tournament, the Indian spinners placed ef-

ficiency ahead of wizardry, and bowled in a manner suited to the conditions.

Ravindra Jadeja found massive turn off the pitch but the New Zealand batters were done in by the effort from Chakravarthy who relentlessly targeted the stumps.

Spinners took over once Hardik Pandya got rid of Rachin Ravindra early.

Williamson, who was dropped on 17 by stumper KL Rahul off Axar Patel, played a refined innings full of placements and elegance, but there hardly was any support for him from the other end.

There was a 44-run alliance between him and

Varun Chakravarthy took five wickets for 42 runs to stifle New Zealand

Daryl Mitchell for third wicket, but just as it was blooming Kuldeep Yadav trapped the latter in front.

They lost Tom Latham (14), Glenn Phillips (12) and Michael Bracewell (2) in quick succession, however, Williamson remained unruffled by the rumblings.

He used soft hands for deft placement of balls through the gaps, but two lofted cover drives off Jadeja for fours adorned his innings like bright diamonds.

But Axar deceived an on-charge Williamson with a slightly fuller and slanted delivery, and Rahul just had to remove the bails from the stumps.



Stefanos Tsitsipas celebrates with the Dubai Tennis Championships trophy on Saturday

Tsitsipas wins Dubai title

Dubai, UAE - Fourth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas saved all seven break points he faced while cruising to a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime on Saturday to win the Dubai Tennis Championships.

Tsitsipas won 83.3 percent (35 of 42) of his first-serve points to knock off Auger-Aliassime in 88 minutes. The Greek won the final four games of the first set then the final three games of the second set. Auger-Aliassime won 70.6 percent (24 of 34) of his first-serve points, but his failure to convert a break point hurt. He was looking for his third title of this year and eighth of his career.

In Santiago, Serbia's Laslo Djere upset top-seeded Francisco Cerundolo of Argentina 6-1, 4-6, 6-3 in the semifinals of the Chile Open.

Ranked No. 103 in the world, Djere saved 5 of 6 break

points and converted 4 of 9 opportunities. Cerundolo, No. 26 in the world, matched Djere with three double faults but countered with only two aces, to four for his opponent.

Djere next faces third-seeded Sebastian Baez, the defending champion who knocked out fellow Argentinian Camilo Ugo Carabelli in three sets, 6-1, 3-6, 6-2. Baez beat Carabelli for the third time in three weeks and is 2-0 all-time against Djere. Baez converted 5 of 10 break-point opportunities vs. Carabelli.

Meanwhile, eighth-seeded Tomas Machac of the Czech Republic picked up his first career ATP Tour win, beating Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 7-6 (6), 6-2 in Acapulco.

The 24-year-old Machac won 29 straight first-serve points at one stretch and won 37 of 39 first-serve points in the match.

ISM-B U16, OCA U16 teams bag titles

Muscat, Oman - Indian School Muscat B (ISM-B) and Oman Cricket Academy won the Oman Cricket's U16 School & Academies League titles respectively last week.

ISWK U16 (Indian School Wadi Kabir) bagged Runners-Up position in the Schools league while MCCC Yellow U13 (Muscat Cricket Coaching Centre) bagged the Runners-Up position in the Academies league.

The tournament witnessed 13 teams competing in two groups in the Schools league, with the top two teams from each group playing the semifinals. Seven teams competed in round-robin format in the academies league.

OCA U16 remained unbeaten throughout the Academies tournament to claim the title.

Oman Cricket Treasurer Alkesh Joshi, Board Member Kiran Asher, and Chief Development Officer Duleep Mendis



Indian School Muscat (ISM-B) players celebrate with the trophy

handed the accolades in the prize distribution ceremony.

Devin Sethmina was adjudged the Best Batter, Samrudh Shankar was the Best Bowler and Aryan Joshi was adjudged Best All Rounder in the Schools league.

In the Academies league,

Shravan Sharat Kurup was adjudged Best Batter, Vihaan Chauhan was adjudged Best Bowler and Ayush Shetty was adjudged Best All Rounder.

Speaking on the tournament's success, Joshi said: "Youth cricket is the foundation of our

cricketing future in Oman. Their participation in structured leagues not only hones their skills but also instills discipline, teamwork, and a winning mindset for them to transition into representing Oman at U16 and U19 levels. Oman Cricket remains committed to providing these players

with the best opportunities, ensuring they have the platform to excel and represent the nation at higher levels. The enthusiasm and growing participation in youth cricket reflect the bright future of the sport in Oman."

Houston offer free tickets for fans after Miami's Messi skips clash

Houston, US - Houston Dynamo have said they will offer their fans a complimentary ticket for a future home game after Lionel Messi did not travel with the Inter Miami squad for Sunday's Major League Soccer match.

The absence of Messi on the pitch has caused the hosts to compensate spectators before,

with match organisers in Hong Kong announcing a 50% refund for tickets last year after the Argentine did not take the field due to injury.

Last August, Chicago Fire announced a credit guarantee on match tickets and season passes if an injured Messi did not play in their home game



Lionel Messi

against Miami.

"The recently shared player status report for the match did not include forward Lionel Messi, but it has been reported he did not make the trip to Houston. Unfortunately, we have no control over who plays for our opponent," Dynamo posted on X on Saturday.

"Fans who attend tomorrow night's match can claim a complimentary ticket to a future Dynamo match this season. Additional details will be provided early next week."

Messi played in this week's Champions Cup clash with Sporting Kansas City, scoring the first goal in Miami's 3-1 win.

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

Indian male having 20 years of experience in Oman & GCC in Project and Dealer Market Sales, and Business Development in construction industry. Having valid D/L. Looking for a suitable job. Ready to join immediately. Contact : 78099493

Indian, MBA, 20yrs of experience in Sales (FMCG/Retail). Previously held Supervisory/Managerial positions. Having D/L, seeks suitable placement. Contact- Sultan: 95548480

FOR RENT

Room for rent in Darsait with bathroom and kitchen, electricity and water is free. The room comes with a sea view. Rent RO95 Contact- 99315986

WJ Towell Group Company



Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

Muscat 9014 6672, 9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218 | Salalah 9429 9325

www.orbit-oman.com



أوربيت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

- Fleet of 2,000 vehicles
- Choose from a wide range of brands & models
- PDO, OXY and BP spec vehicles available
- Attractive rates for short-term & long-term lease

CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

MUSCAT DAILY offers a variety of classified listings for individuals and establishments:

Situations Vacant/Wanted, Accommodation Wanted or Available, Sale of Household Items, Cars for Sale or Wanted, Matrimonial Alliances, etc

Please email your listing to dailyclassifieds@apexmedia.co.om or call: 99104346



Birthday/ Anniversary wishes to
wish@apexmedia.co.om
with your resident card copy (It's free of cost)

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

The most efficient and authentic
Ayurvedic Treatment & Medicine,
Yoga, Kalari, Panchakarma, Massage,
Dhara etc... Rehabilitation, Beauty
therpay & post Delivery Care

Zaher Building ,1st Floor, Flat 8A,
Al Khuwair Service Road ,near Al Zawawi
Mosque & Burger-king Tel:24475280,
GSM: 95371664 , 92504980 ,
Website:www.siddhayur.com





Under the warm glow of parafin lanterns at Forodhani Park, a lively culinary hotspot in Zanzibar's historic Stone Town, the clinking of spoons against plates blended with the salty breeze from the Indian Ocean.

Salma Mansour Ahmed, draped in a flowing black burqa, laughed softly as she savoured a bowl of Zanzibar mix, a popular street food also known as 'Mbatata urojo.'

"This is what I love about Stone Town," she said, glancing around at the vibrant evening scene. "Tasty food, the history, the sea. It's all here."

Around her, tourists meandered through the labyrinthine streets, browsing for souvenirs, while stray cats prowled the alleys, their urgent meows rising as they scavenged for scraps.

The charm of Stone Town was alive, its rich history and cultural blend present in every street corner.

But as Ahmed's gaze shifted toward the waves crashing against the concrete embankment, her tone darkened.

"The sea," she said, her voice dropping, "is also taking it all away."

For centuries, Stone Town has stood as a testament to Zanzibar's diverse cultural heritage. Its narrow alleys, elaborately carved wooden doors, and coral-stone buildings reflect a confluence of Arab, Persian, Indian, and African influences.

Once a thriving hub of trade and commerce, the town was designated a Unesco World Heritage site in 2000 for its historical significance.

But the same ocean that once brought prosperity to Stone Town now poses an existential threat.

Rising sea levels, coupled with increasingly violent storms, are steadily eroding the town's foundations. The saltwater seeps into the coral-stone walls, weakening them from within and hastening their collapse.

"This is a very serious problem, but we are taking action to mitigate the effects of rising sea levels," said Ali Said Bakar, director of the Stone Town Preservation and Development Authority.

Bakar and his team are racing against time to safeguard the town's historic buildings, implementing a combination of modern engi-

STONE TOWN OF ZANZIBAR

HERITAGE SITE SHAPED BY THE SEA FIGHTS TO SURVIVE ITS RISE

neering solutions and traditional construction techniques to protect against the encroaching tides.

He has dedicated years to protecting Stone Town's architectural legacy, and leads a team of architects, engineers, and volunteers overseeing the restoration of some of the town's most endangered structures.

"The coastline is rapidly shrinking, but engineers are tirelessly working to erect stronger barriers," he told Anadolu.

Efforts to protect the town include reinforcing the sea walls, restoring aging buildings, and engaging the local community in mangrove restoration - an ecological strategy that helps absorb the impact of waves.

"We combine traditional knowledge with modern engineering to preserve what we can," he explained.

Human costs and stories of survival

Yet despite these efforts, the forces of nature continue to threaten Zanzibar's historic core.

For Ali Seif Hamad, a seasoned tour guide and lifelong resident of Stone Town, the changes have been personal.

"I've seen the ocean creep closer every year," he said. "When I was a boy, the beach was much wider, but now the water reaches our doorsteps."

Hamad's guided tours often conclude at

the House of Wonders, a grand 19th-century palace that once symbolised Zanzibar's wealth and influence. Now, the building lies in ruins, its facade supported by scaffolding after years of neglect and saltwater damage.

"This place used to draw so many tourists," Hamad lamented. "Now, it's just another crumbling relic."

The impact of climate change on Stone Town extends beyond its crumbling architecture. The rising tides have taken a toll on its

people, particularly those who rely on fishing and tourism - two industries crucial to Zanzibar's economy.

Salma Ahmed Hirji, a local conservationist, has been working with women's groups to raise awareness about climate change and its devastating impact on their community.

"Climate change is not just affecting the environment," she explained. "It affects our culture, our livelihoods, and our identity."

Fisherfolk, who once depended on stable weather patterns, now face unpredictable storms that make their work increasingly dangerous. Tour operators, whose businesses rely on the town's historical appeal, worry that if the structures continue to decay, tourism revenue will dwindle.

"The weather is not predictable at all," Hirji said. "That uncertainty affects everything."

I'VE SEEN THE OCEAN CREEP CLOSER EVERY YEAR. WHEN I WAS A BOY, THE BEACH WAS MUCH WIDER, BUT NOW THE WATER REACHES OUR DOORSTEPS

ALI SEIF HAMAD

What lies ahead?

Recognising the urgency of the situation, international organizations have stepped in to help. Unesco, in partnership with local authorities, has launched restoration projects aimed at preserving Stone Town's unique architecture.

The initiative not only focuses on repairing buildings but also trains local artisans in traditional construction methods, ensuring that the craftsmanship of past generations is not lost.

"We're not just restoring buildings," Bakar emphasized. "We're restoring a way of life."

Beyond physical preservation, efforts are also being made to document Stone Town's intangible cultural heritage - its music, cuisine, and oral traditions - so that even if the landscape changes, the town's legacy endures.

Despite the daunting challenges, there is a shared sense of resilience among Stone Town's residents. At Forodhani Gardens, as the evening progressed, more locals gathered, enjoying the cool breeze and each other's company.

Fatma Karim Juma, a longtime resident, recalled how her family had to rebuild their home after it was damaged by flooding.

"It was hard," she admitted, "but we didn't give up. This town is our home, and we will do whatever it takes to protect it."

That determination is echoed by preservationists like Bakar, who remains steadfast in his mission.

"Stone Town has faced many challenges in its history," he said. "Slavery, colonization, revolution - we've survived it all. We'll survive this too."

Preserving Stone Town is an enormous task, requiring both immediate interventions and long-term strategies.

Bakar and his team continue to push for more resources, funding, and awareness to ensure that the town's historical legacy is not lost to the rising tides.

"We will do everything possible to restore buildings and preserve a legacy for future generations," he affirmed.

As the tide crept higher along the shore, Ahmed stood with her friends, their laughter interwoven with the sound of crashing waves.

"We can't let the sea take this away from us," she said.

Anadolu Agency





Ramadan During Spring



Captivating spirituality and
unforgettable tourism
experience in Jordan

This year, visitors to Jordan can expect an extraordinary experience during the holy month of Ramadan, as it is occurring during spring. This unique timing blends spiritual traditions with cultural and heritage activities and the kingdom's breathtaking spring landscapes.

Visitors from the GCC and neighbouring nations can enjoy weekend getaways or extended stays, thanks to Jordan's proximity and the availability of affordable daily flights making travelling to Jordan during Ramadan a truly worthwhile experience.

As Jordanian cities turn into bustling lively hubs during Ramadan evenings, visitors will have a rare opportunity to immerse themselves in the spiritual atmosphere and participate in traditional religious and cultural celebrations. Adding to that, the visitors can explore the kingdom's diverse tourist attractions, making Jordan an ideal destination for families seeking a rich and authentic Ramadan experience.

Jordan's hospitality sector is gearing up to welcome guests during the holy month, offering authentic iftar and suhoor experiences that reflect traditional Jordanian hospitality. Menus are filled with traditional dishes, such as mansaf - the national dish made of lamb, rice, and fermented yogurt - and maqluba, a savory blend of rice, meat or chicken, and vegetables, flipped before serving to reveal a harmonious fusion of flavors.

Ramadan tables also include traditional soups like warm lentil soup, alongside famous desserts like qatayef stuffed with walnuts or cream and soaked in syrup and kunafa, adding flavour and authenticity to the Ramadan experience.

Shopping malls and traditional markets bustle with life

during Ramadan, with festive bazaars offering a delightful range of handmade crafts, traditional clothing, and delicious Ramadan treats. Night markets in downtown Amman and along Rainbow Street shine brightly under colourful Ramadan lights.

The shared cultural values between Jordan and GCC countries create a welcoming atmosphere for the visitors from the Gulf. The spiritual ambiance of the holy month adds a special charm, with mosques across the Kingdom hosting worshippers for daily prayers and Taraweeh prayers that light up Ramadan nights. Additionally, communal meals known as Mawa'ed al Rahman highlight the essence of Jordanian hospitality.

Jordan's tourism industry offers a range of services that suit every preference and need; from luxurious five-star hotels to more economical options to furnished apartments designed for families and large groups, ensuring the highest levels of comfort and convenience. Many hotels also offer special Ramadan packages that include iftar and suhoor meals, in addition to cultural events that enhance the festive atmosphere.

The holy month concludes with Eid al Fitr celebrations, which last for three days and feature special events at major tourist destinations across Jordan. This occasion is considered an opportunity for friends and families to exchange visits and gifts while enjoying maamoul, the traditional date or walnut filled pastry. Eid prayers are held in mosques, while various cultural and tourist events are organized throughout the Kingdom, adding a vibrant festive spirit to the celebrations.

ALL NEW
UNI-V

This Ramadan Experience
the Art of Automotive Luxury

EMI
OMR 125⁺
for 6 years

1.5L Turbo Engine,
188hp, 7-Speed DCT

EMI
OMR 138⁺
for 6 years

2.0L Turbo Engine,
232 hp, 8-Speed AT

FREE SERVICE
5 Years /
105,000 Kms[#]

FREE
INSURANCE*

FREE
REGISTRATION*

FREE
WINDOW TINTING AND
PAINT PROTECTION*

VAT (5%)
INCLUSIVE IN
VEHICLE PRICE

SUPER WARRANTY
6 YEARS /
UNLIMITED MILEAGE**

Offer valid from 20th February to 20th April 2025 on all models purchased through the CHANGAN AUTO Showroom Retail Offer. #Whichever is earlier. Periodic Maintenance Service only. Offer includes only 10,000 kms service intervals. #For 1st year, Oman & UAE only. **For 1st year only. *Window Tinting and Ceramic Coating warranty will be 3 years against manufacturing defects and will be fitted at our own Service Centres. **Whichever is earlier. *Easy Monthly Installment is calculated based on 20% down payment for 6 years loan tenure. Subject to credit approvals from Banks only. Applicable on vehicles purchased for personal use. Images shown are for illustrative purpose only. Specification may vary as per the model variant. To know more, please visit the CHANGAN Showroom.

Arabian Gulf Automobiles
and Equipment LLC

Showrooms:
Qurum 94641010, Mawaleh 97888180, Nizwa 96628940
Sohar 95351200, Salalah 96629050, Ibri 96628930,
Barka 96629010, Sur 96628920

800 50800
9662 8909

www.changanoman.com



CELEBRATE RAMADAN WITH BMW.

Embrace the spirit of Ramadan with an exclusive offer from BMW. Purchase your brand-new BMW and enjoy the below incredible benefits:

- BMW Service for 5 years/100,000 kms*
- BMW Warranty for 5 years/200,000 kms*
- BMW Roadside Assistance for 5 years/200,000 kms*
- 1st Year Free Insurance*
- 1st Year Free Registration
- Free BMW Lifestyle Gift
- Free Services from AutoSpa
- A chance to win 1 of 3 brand new BMW vehicles

* Terms and Conditions apply.

* Whichever comes first.

* The draw will happen at the end of March, April and May.

Al Jenaibi International Automobiles

Toll-free 800 50008

www.bmw-oman.com