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HM THE SULTAN HOSTS DINNER ON SAF DAY

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, hosted a dinner on the occasion of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) Day at Al Alam Palace on Thursday. The ceremony was attended by some Royal family members, ministers, commanders of the SAF and senior military and civil officers, as well as retired officers.

Story, Pictures >A2

OMAN'S TRADE SURPLUS REACHES OMR3.8 BILLION



The Sultanate's non-oil exports grew by 10.3% to OMR5.002 billion by the end of September 2025, according to NCSI data

the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI) showed that the total value of goods exports decreased by 9.1% to OMR17.182 billion by end of September 2025 compared to OMR18.906 billion during the same period in 2024.

This decrease is basically attributed to the decrease in the Sultanate's oil and gas exports by 16.5% to OMR10.913 billion by the end of September 2025 compared to OMR13.071 billion during the same period in 2024.

The Sultanate's non-oil exports grew by 10.3% to OMR5.002 billion by the end of September 2025 against OMR4.534 billion during the same period in 2024.

Re-exports decreased by 2.6% by the end of September 2025 to OMR1.266 billion compared to OMR1.300 billion during the same period in 2024. >A6

MUSCAT: Oman's trade surplus fell by 42% to OMR3.885 billion, by end of September 2025 compared to OMR6.743 billion during the same period in 2024.

The initial statistics issued by

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Oman's industrial sector wins praise

1 Oman has received praise after making rapid progress in industrial sector. >A3



OMAN

Saysid Badr attends Turkmenistan forum

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Credit granted by banking sector rises

3 The total credit granted by the banking sector in Oman rose by 9%. >B2





Victoria Swarovski

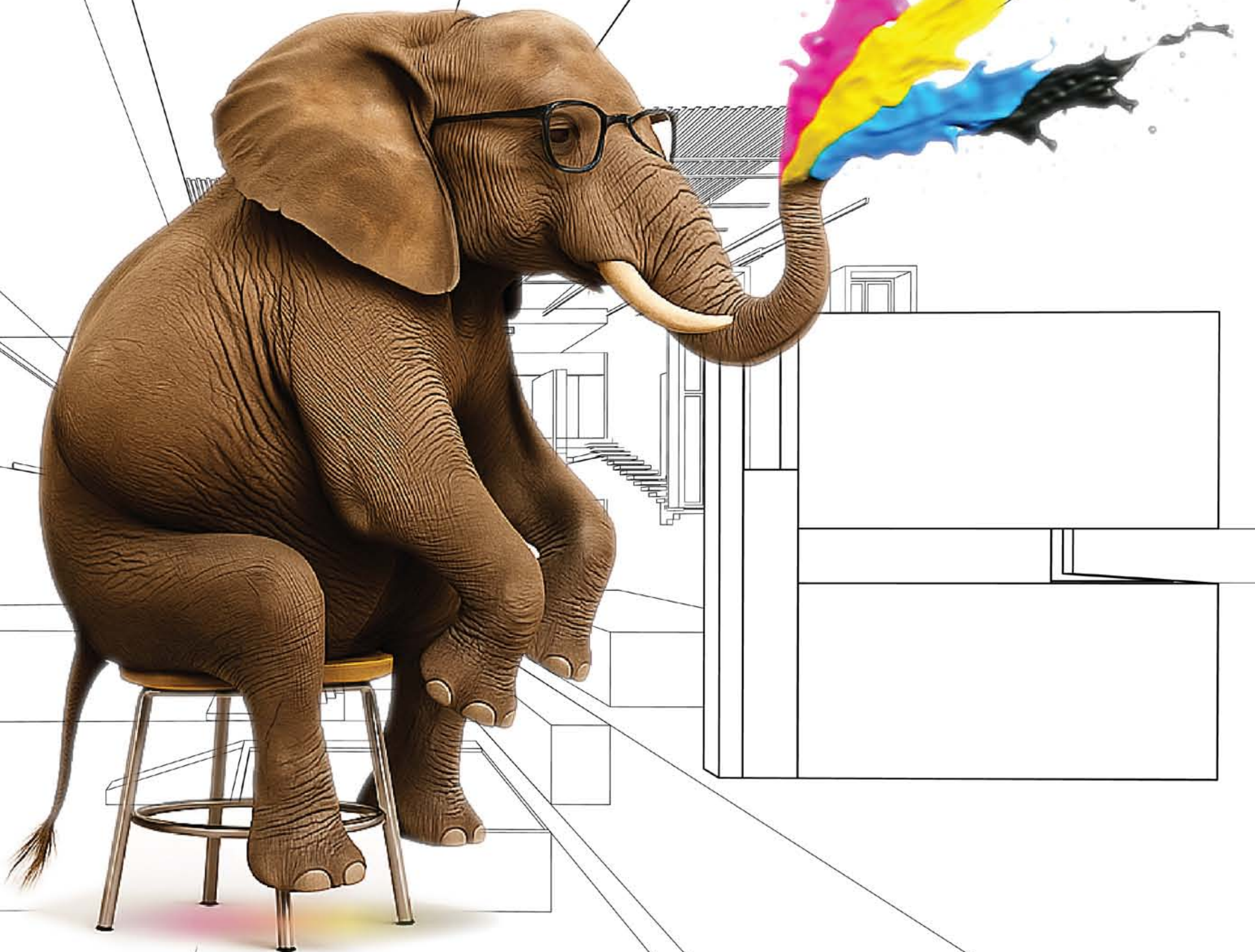
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OMAN

PRAYER
TIMINGS



Dhuhr.....	12:06pm
Asr.....	3:07pm
Maghrib.....	5:27pm
Isha.....	6:43pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	5:21am

HM hosts dinner on SAF Day

The ceremony was attended by some Royal family members, ministers, commanders of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) and senior military and civil officers, as well as retired officers

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, the Supreme Commander, hosted a dinner at Al Alam Palace on Thursday evening on the occasion of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) Day.

The ceremony was attended by some Royal family members, ministers, commanders of the Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) and senior military and civil officers, as well as retired officers.

This celebration embodies the Royal attention of His Majesty to his armed forces, in recognition of their dedicated roles in defending the nation's resources, safeguarding its sovereignty, and strengthening the pillars of stability and security.

This ensures that citizens and residents live in tranquility and peace, and that the renewed renaissance marches forward with steady steps towards horizons of development and prosperity under the leadership of His Majesty the Sultan. - ONA



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COMMENTARY

How Oman’s new labour law strengthens the framework for Omanisation



DR. MOHAMMED IBRAHIM AL ZADJALI, FOUNDING PARTNER OF MOHAMMED IBRAHIM LAW FIRM

The employment of Omani citizens stands as a central pillar of the Sultanate of Oman’s national labour policy, firmly embedded under Royal Decree 53/2023, which promulgates the Labour Law. This legal framework establishes “Omanization” as a structured program aimed at increasing the targeted employment of Omani nationals within the private sector workforce. Speaking to the Times of Oman, Dr. Mohammed Ibrahim Al Zadjali, Founding Partner of Mohammed Ibrahim Law Firm,



explained that “the law mandates that employers maintain a special register with details on their Omani workforce, including of the number of the Omani workers, showing their occupations, wages, and gender, along with job vacancies during a year, if any and the annual Omanization plan. This register must be updated and submitted to the Ministry annually.” He further stated that “employers with a workforce of 25 or more employees bear additional statutory responsibilities, such as publicizing job vacancies, adhering to the ministry’s occupational classification, determining wages and working conditions, providing skill development

training for Omani staff, ensuring a suitable work environment, implementing performance appraisal systems, preparing plans to appoint Omanis to leadership roles, and developing strategies to retain Omani manpower.” He added that, “to ensure implementation, the law empowers the Minister of Labour to set specific Omanization percentages for each economic sector and to designate occupations where Omanis must replace non-Omanis. Further, employers with over 40 workers must also hire a quota of qualified Omani persons with disabilities.” The law also provides support mechanisms. It allows for the creation of a national fund to finance

training and empowerment programs. Further, to enforce compliance, if an employer does not meet the required Omanization targets, a fine will be charged for every Omani worker who should have been hired under the law. If the Employers repeats the same violation again, the fine will be doubled. He concluded by stating that “this combination of employer mandates, penalties for non-compliance, and state support creates a comprehensive system designed to boost Omani participation in the private sector workforce.”

(Mohammed Ibrahim Law Firm (info@mohammedibrahim.net), (+968 244 87 600) was established 18 years ago and is serving clients through its offices in Muscat and Sohar, as well as operating on a request basis in other areas. It offers legal representation across a wide range of practice areas that include Labour Law, Corporate, Commercial, Contracts, Banking and Finance, International Trade, Foreign Investment, Insurance, Maritime Law, Construction and Engineering Contracts, International Arbitration, Intellectual Property and more).

OCCI’S SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES COMMITTEE

Omani products in great demand at Bahrain exhibition

MANAMA: The Small and Medium Enterprises Committee of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, reached an agreement with the organising committee in Bahrain to expand the participation of Omani institutions in terms of number and sectors in the upcoming editions of the ‘Mara’ee’ exhibition. Sheikh Ahmed Amer Al Muselhi, Chairman of the Small and Medium Enterprises Committee at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, confirmed that there is a great demand for Omani products at the exhibition from consumers and residents in Bahrain.

At the end of exhibition in Bahrain, he added that the Small and Medium Enterprises Committee of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry seeks, through participation in Gulf exhibitions, to introduce Omani products, their diversity, and the high quality and packaging they have reached in the field of Omani dates, in confirmation of the Chamber’s vision in developing entrepreneurship and building foreign relations. He pointed to the importance of deepening the economic part-



nership and developing communication channels between the chambers of commerce in the two countries, in order to serve the small and medium enterprises sector and enhance its role in supporting economic development in the region. It is worth mentioning that the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, represented by the Small and Medium Enterprises Committee, participated in the Bahrain Animal and Agriculture Production Show with 22 institutions representing the date sector, date-related industries, and other food products. — ONA

Oman’s industrial sector wins praise

United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) report for 2026 classified the Sultanate of Oman among the emerging countries globally in the industrial sector



United Solar Polysilicon project in the Sohar Free Zone, which is among the most important industrial projects in the region, aiming to produce 100,000 tonnes annually of polysilicon to meet the growing regional demand for solar energy solutions and enhance Oman’s position in global supply chains. The report also highlighted the assets that Oman possesses, such as the availability of high-quality silica sand raw materials, the strength of the sunshine and the movement of winds throughout the year, in addition to the strategic geographical location on one of the most important international sea routes. The government also provides a range of investment incentives, most notably tax exemptions and 100 percent foreign ownership, which makes the Sultanate of Oman a competitive environment for localising advanced industries. Sheida Industries launched construction work on its first solar panel factory on an area of 11,250 square metres, in addition to signig an agreement with the Chinese company JA Solar to establish a factory with a capacity of 6 gigawatts for cells and 3 gigawatts for panels, with an investment of US\$564 million, mainly directed towards the Gulf and African markets. It also announced the “Turbine Resources Company” project in Duqm, which aims to manufacture wind turbines with investments estimated at US\$181.8 mil-

lion. In the field of green hydrogen technology manufacturing, the Sultanate of Oman is preparing to establish an electrolyser assembly plant in cooperation with the Chinese company “Sungrow Power”, which enhances its position on the map of high-tech manufacturing in Arab countries. Eng. Khalid bin Salim Al Qasabi, Director General of Industry at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, pointed out that this progress came as a result of adopting stimulating industrial policies and systematic initiatives aimed at attracting quality industries with advanced technologies. He explained that the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion worked to facilitate procedures for investors, raise the readiness of free and economic zones to attract advanced industries, and empower the industrial sector through a wide package of incentives, which included developing a flexible regulatory framework, providing tax incentives and customs exemptions, and simplifying licensing procedures, in addition to directing investments towards economic zones with integrated infrastructure capable of including advanced industrial projects, which contributes to enhancing local added value and linking global investors to promising industrial opportunities. — ONA

Times News Service VIENNA: The Sultanate of Oman has received widespread international praise after making rapid progress in localising high-quality industries with advanced technologies and developing its production capabilities, according to the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) report for 2026. The report classified the Sultanate of Oman among the emerging countries globally in the industrial sector. The report confirmed that the Sultanate of Oman has made a remarkable leap in building industrial value chains related to advanced technology industries, despite its recent entry into this field, as it has been able to establish a promising industrial base in photovoltaic cell-related industries, benefiting from attracting quality investments, implementing stimulating government procurement policies, and providing an attractive business environment for modern technologies. The report highlighted a number of industrial projects under development, most notably the

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The Oman Marketing Impact Awards 2025



TOMI 2025 — OMAN'S BIGGEST CELEBRATION OF MARKETING EXCELLENCE



MUSCAT: Muscat Media Group successfully hosted the 2025 edition of TOMI – The Oman Marketing Impact Awards on 10th December, bringing together more than 200 leading professionals from Oman and the wider MENA region.

Held at Crowne Plaza Qurum, Muscat, the event marked the Sultanate's largest and most dynamic celebration of marketing excellence. The event united the full marketing ecosystem, including agencies, client-side marketers, digital innovators, startups, media platforms, content creators and production houses, in a vibrant showcase of creativity, strategy and real impact.

Speaking at the event, Fadi Kattar, Chief Operating Officer of Muscat Media Group, said, "TOMI is more than an awards platform. It is a celebration of the ideas, innovation and talent that continue to elevate Oman's marketing landscape, and that each winner reflects the progress, ambition and creative excellence shaping the nation's future."

His Highness Sayyid Subaib bin Barghash Al Said was the Chief Guest, honouring the outstanding contributions that are redefining Oman's marketing and communications industry. His Highness Mohamad bin Salim Al Said also graced the occasion with his esteemed presence.

The event featured insightful talks by Alex Rodrigues, Head of AI Creative Content at Saatchi & Saatchi, UAE; Gaurav Oberoi, Founder of AI School and Inc. Insights, UAE; and Farah El Kadi, Regional Executive Creative Director at SSUP World, Lebanon. A live illusionist performance, followed by music from a band, added a captivating entertainment element to the evening.

A total of 42 awards were presented, including the prestigious TOMI Gold Awards, recognising individuals and organisations that have made a lasting difference in the marketing industry through innovation, vision and consistency.

Among the key winners of TOMI 2025 were JW Marriott for Best Content Marketing; Lulu Hypermarket Oman for Best CSR Campaign; Sohar International for Best Overall Advertising Campaign; Ooredoo for Best Digital-out-of-home Campaign; Infoline for Best Use of AI; Bank Muscat as the Bank of the Year for Innovation in Marketing Campaigns; Kalpesh Dave of Asian Paints as Marketing Person of the Year; and Maal, the national payment card brand by the Central Bank

of Oman, for Strategic National Brand Launch of the Year.

Oman Football Academy League (OFAL) won Best National Sports Initiative. Sabco Sports was named Best Experiential Marketing Agency, OHI Leo Burnett won Best Ad Agency, Prime Advertising was named Best PR Agency, and Bullseye Communication was recognised as Best Digital Marketing Agency.

Zeitoun Advertising received Emerging Agency of the Year, Fori Events won Best On-Ground Event Agency, and ADINCO was honoured for Distinguished Service to Advertising and Branding. Havas won Best Agency Team.

Several brands were celebrated for excellence across print, digital and video categories. Changan and Nasejoman of Oman Textile Mills won Best Print Advertising. IDesign claimed Best Digital Advertising; Crowne Plaza Qurum won Best Video Advertising; Al Mouj Muscat received Best Luxury Brand Video; Chevrolet got the Best Launch Video; Mercedes-Benz won Best Explainer Video; ASaffa won Best Animated Video; Suzuki Oman received Best Video Ad with VFX; Bake In Oman won Best Marketing

Video Concept; Changan won Best Content Marketing Video; Minara Cooking Oil won Best Product Video; Security and Safety won Best Rebranding Video; Bahar – The National Detergent Co. won Best Influencer Marketing; and BMW Oman won Best Celebrity Collaboration Campaign.

Asian Paints won Best Event Design, Lulu Hypermarket Oman won Best Event Activity, Oman Arab Bank won Best Corporate Engagement Event, MHD – Jetour won Best Live Brand Experience, and Ooredoo won Best Event Launch Video.

Sohar International was awarded Best Event of the Year, while Ford Oman – Arabian Car Marketing Co. won Best Out-of-the-Box Launch.

The TOMI Gold Awards honoured select industry leaders and visionaries, including: Luma Al Saleh, Partner at Identity, as Agency Person of the Year; Ashish Ganatra, Head of Marketing & Communications at MHD ACRE, as Marketing Leader of the Year; and Dr. Mazin Al Raisi, Chief Marketing Officer of Sohar International, as the Marketing Icon.

The 2025 TOMI Awards reaffirm Muscat Media Group's commitment to celebrating the individuals, teams and organisations that are elevating Oman's marketing industry through creativity, innovation and measurable impact.



Fadi Kattar, Chief Operating Officer, Muscat Media Group



Alex Rodrigues, Head of AI Creative Content at Saatchi & Saatchi, UAE



Gaurav Oberoi, Founder of AI School and Inc. Insights, UAE



Farah El Kadi, Regional Executive Creative Director at SSUP World, Lebanon



Marketing Icon: Dr. Mazin Al Raisi, Sohar International



Marketing Leader of the Year: Ashish Ganatra, MHD ACRE



Agency Person of the Year: Luma Al Saleh, Identity



Best Out-Of-The-Box Launch: Ford Oman, Arabian Car Marketing Co.



Best Event of the Year: Sohar International



Best Event Launch Video: Ooredoo



Best Live Brand Experience: MHD, Jetour



Best Corporate Engagement Event: Oman Arab Bank



Best Event Activity: Lulu Hypermarket Oman



Best Event Design: Asian Paints



Best Celebrity Collab Campaign: BMW Oman



Best Influencer Marketing: Bahar, The National Detergent Co.



Best Rebranding Video: Security and Safety



Best Product Video: Minara Cooking Oil



Best Content Marketing Video: Changan



Best Marketing Video Concept: Bake In Oman



Best Video Ad with VFX: Suzuki Oman



Best Animated Video: ASaffa



Best Explainer Video: Mercedes-Benz



Best Launch Video: Chevrolet



Best Luxury Brand Launch Video: Al Mouj Muscat



Best Video Advertising: Crowne Plaza Qurum



Best Digital Advertising: IDesign



Best Print Advertising: Nasejoman, Oman Textile Mills



Best Print Advertising: Changan



Best Agency Team: Havas



Distinguished Service to Advertising & Branding: ADINCO



Best On-Ground Event Agency: Fori Events



Best PR Agency: Prime Advertising



Emerging Agency of the Year: Zeitoun Advertising



Best Digital Marketing Agency: Bullseye Communication



Strategic National Brand Launch of the Year: Maal, Central Bank of Oman



Marketing Person of the Year: Kalpesh Dave, Asian Paints



Bank of the Year for Innovation in Marketing Campaigns: Bank Muscat



Best National Sports Initiative: Oman Football Academy League (OFAL)



Best Overall Advertising Campaign: Sohar International



Best CSR Campaign: Lulu Hypermarket Oman



Best Use of AI: Infoline



Best Digital-out-of-home (DOOH) Campaign: Ooredoo



Best Content Marketing: JW Marriott



MEMORANDUM OF COOPERATION

Ibri Healthy City signs pact with WHO

IBRI: A memorandum of cooperation (MoC) was signed on Thursday in the Wilayat of Ibri between Ibri Healthy City and the World Health Organization (WHO). This is part of national efforts aimed at strengthening partnerships that support the Healthy Cities programs, contributing to achieving sustainable development and raising the level of health

awareness in the community. Sheikh Dr. Said bin Humaid Al Harthy, Wali of Ibri and chief guest of the event, delivered a speech, clarifying that the signing of the cooperation memorandum represents an important milestone in the journey of the Healthy Cities programme in the Wilayat. He pointed out that the initiative aligns with the goals of Oman Vision 2040 in the areas of health,

well-being, and community development. He affirmed that the declaration of Ibri as a Healthy City reflects the commitment of various institutions in the Wilayat to enhancing the quality of life and building a sustainable urban environment that contributes to improving health services and practices.

He added that the Wilayat of Ibri possesses human, geographical, and urban resources that qualify it for joining the global network of Healthy Cities. He stressed the importance of integrated efforts among government, private, and civil society sectors to ensure the sustainability of this program and the achievement of its objectives. — **ONA**



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Oman attends forum that promotes diplomatic solutions and dialogue

The forum served as an international platform for exchanging views on ways to strengthen multilateral cooperation, build mutual trust and develop effective partnerships



Times News Service

ASHGABAT: Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Al Busaidi headed the Sultanate of Oman's delegation to the International Forum "Peace and Trust: Unity of Purpose for a Sustainable Future," held to mark the International Year of Peace and Trust 2025 and the thirtieth anniversary of Turkmenistan's neutrality. The forum, convened in Ashgabat, brought together numerous world leaders, heads of international organisations and senior officials from across the globe. It served as an international platform for exchanging views on ways to strengthen multilateral cooperation, build mutual trust and develop effective partnerships that support regional and international security and stability.

The event forms part of the international activities hosted by Turkmenistan on the occasion of the UN-declared International Year of Peace and Trust 2025, which aims to promote constructive dialogue and encourage diplomatic solutions to conflicts. Oman's participation reflects its steady approach in supporting initiatives that advance peace. It also highlights the country's commitment to preventive diplomacy and its encouragement of dialogue, understanding and harmony among nations. This approach is rooted in Oman's foreign policy principles of mutual respect, good neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of others and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It also aligns with Oman's support for initiatives that enhance

security and shared interests among peoples, and with its active regional and international role in promoting stability and strengthening cooperation. **Sayyid Badr holds talks with Foreign Minister of Türkiye** Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi held a meeting with Hakan Fidan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye. The meeting took place on the margins of the International Forum on Peace and Trust in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The Ministers reviewed areas of cooperation between the two countries and consulted on regional developments. **Meeting with Iran FM** Foreign Minister held a meet-

ing with Iran's Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi on the margins of the International Forum on Peace and Trust in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The meeting discussed various areas of cooperation. It also included consultations and an exchange of views on developments and issues in the region. **Minister meets Deputy Prime Minister of Turkmenistan** The Foreign met with Rashid Meredow, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, as part of Oman's participation in the High-Level International Forum on Peace and Trust held in the Turkmen capital Ashgabat. Sayyid Badr expressed his sincere appreciation for the warm



welcome and the well-organised arrangements for this important international gathering. He also referred to the political consultations between the two countries and underlined the importance of continuing efforts to conclude fur-

ther agreements and memoranda of understanding that expand opportunities for cooperation and partnership between the two friendly countries. **Sayyid Badr meets Foreign Minister of Pakistan** Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi met with Mohammad Ishaq, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the High-Level International Forum on Peace and Trust, held in the Turkmen capital Ashgabat with the participation of more than sixty countries and international organisations. — **ONA**

PRESTIGIOUS AWARD

Minister of Endowments to preside over Sultan Qaboos Award ceremony

MUSCAT: Under the royal directive of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik His Excellency Dr. Mohammed bin Said Al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs, will preside over the award ceremony for the 12th edition of the Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts, and Literature, scheduled for 17 December 2025. This year's prestigious award honours three distinguished recipients: - Asilah Forum Foundation in the category of "Private Cultural Institutions (Culture branch)

- Essam Mohamed Sayed Darwish in the field of sculpture (Arts branch) - Hikmat Al Sabbagh, known by her pen name Yumna Al Eid, in the category of Autobiography (Literature branch) Each laureate will receive the Sultan Qaboos Order of Culture, Science, Arts, and Literature, along with a monetary prize of OMR100,000. During the ceremony, Dr. Al Maamari will also announce the categories for the 13th edition of the award, which will be dedicated exclusively to Omani

nationals. The award alternates annually between a national edition for Omanis and a pan-Arab edition open to participants from across the Arab world. It is noteworthy that a total of 466 candidates met the eligibility criteria for the 12th cycle, including: - 88 nominees in the Private Cultural Institutions category (Culture) - 97 nominees in Sculpture (Arts) - 281 nominees in Autobiography (Literature) — **ONA**

NCSI DATA

Oman's total goods imports rise to OMR13.297 billion

< FROM A1 The NCSI statistics further showed an increase in the total registered goods imports to OMR13.297 billion by the end of September 2025 compared to OMR12.163 billion during the corresponding period in 2024, registering an increase of 9.3%. Among Omani non-oil export destinations, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) topped the list, with exports worth OMR945 million, an increase of 28.3%, by the end of September 2025 compared to the same period in 2024. The UAE also topped the list of countries to which Oman re-exported, by OMR484 million, as well as the list of the countries



exporting to Oman by the value of imports from it at OMR3.071 billion. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) came second in the list of the Sultanate's non-oil exports by OMR837 million followed by India at OMR529 million. In the

re-exports, Iran came second at OMR225 million followed by KSA at OMR 113 million. In the list of countries exporting to Oman, China came second with imports of OMR1.348 billion followed by Kuwait with imports worth OMR1.151 billion. — **ONA**



Notice for The Extraordinary General Meeting and The Ordinary General Meeting of Dhofar University S.A.O.C

The Board of Directors of Dhofar University S.O.A.C is pleased to invite the company's shareholders to attend the **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**, followed consecutively by the **Annual Ordinary General Meeting (AGM)**, scheduled to be held at **3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 30 December 2025**, via the electronic platform designated for general meetings, accessible through the website of Muscat Clearing and Depository S.A.O.C. (www.mcd.gov.om). If the legal quorum required for holding the meeting is not met, the second meeting shall be held at **3:00 p.m. on the following day, Wednesday, 31 December 2025**, via the same electronic platform. The agenda of the valid meeting will be as follows:

EGM Agenda

- To approve the amendment to the Articles of Association of Dhofar University S.A.O.C. in accordance with the final draft resulting from the amendment.

(Attached: the amended draft of the Articles of Association, the Board's explanatory letter outlining the reasons for the amendment and the previous version of the Articles of Association).

AGM Agenda

- To complete the number of members of the Board of Directors of Dhofar University S.A.O.C. by electing three new members to complete the current term of the Board, if the Extraordinary General Meeting approves the amendment to the Articles of Association, or electing one member only in the event the amendment is rejected.

Any person wishing to be nominated as a member of the Board of Directors must fill out the nomination form prepared for this purpose. The form should be delivered to the company at least five working days before the AGM date, not later than the end of the workday on Monday, 22 December 2025.

As per the Articles of Association of the company, the MOCI's guidelines of holding AGMs for SAOC companies via electronic means and the other relevant rules, please note the following:

a) A legal person only has the right to appoint a natural person to attend the AGM and vote on decisions taken on his behalf via electronic means. This natural person must have an ID issued by Muscat Clearing and Depository Company SAOC.

b) Shareholders have the right to vote on any of the agenda items starting no earlier than three days from the date of holding the AGM. In case the shares owned by a shareholder changed (increased/decreased), the vote shall be void and a new vote needs to be made on the day of the AGM.

In case of any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the Legal Advisor: Mohammed Abbas, Tel. No.: 23237108, GSM: 94043168

Chairman Tariq Salim Mustahil Al Mashani	Legal Advisor Mohammed Abbas	External Auditor ERNST & YOUNG LLC
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Oman draws a clear roadmap for exploration of its vital minerals

Airborne and geochemical surveys conducted by Oman Mining Development Company during the past period reveal geological evidence of several strategic ores, including: gold, copper, zinc, lead, and chromium



MUSCAT: The mining sector in the Sultanate of Oman is considered one of the promising sectors, with a clear roadmap that enhances exploration efforts and provides reliable data on mineral resources in various governorates.

Airborne and geochemical surveys conducted by Oman Mining Development Company during the past period reveal geological evidence of several strategic ores, including: gold, copper, zinc, lead, and chromium.

These results indicate the presence of fertile geological environments that require further detailed work to verify the size and quality of these resources.

Engineer Matar bin Salim Al Badi, CEO of Oman Mining Development Company, confirmed that current indicators reflect promising exploration opportunities in the Sultanate of Oman, stressing that the current stage is still within the scope of technical studies, while the existence of commercial quantities of any ore - including gold - requires the completion of detailed exploration phases in accordance with international standards.

He added that continuous exploration is essential to ensuring the sustainability of mining projects and extending the lifespan of existing plants, thus contributing to enhancing the economic value of the mining sector in the Sultanate of Oman.



cally viable, compared to aerial surveys of small areas of around 5 square kilometres previously.

He added that Oman Mining Development Company – the investment and development arm of the mining sector – operates as a holding company and owns 14 concession areas with a total area of about 24,000 square kilometres.

The company began its intensive exploration work in 2022, noting that prior to the launch of the company's new strategy, which was approved last month, the company carried out extensive surveys that included an aerial survey of areas exceeding 16,000 square kilometres and exploratory drilling operations that reached more than 100,000 metres in total depths to take samples and analyse more than 80,000 samples through geochemical surveys on the ground and the use of satellite surveys to identify targeted exploration points.

He explained that the company's strategy aims to reduce investment risks by providing accurate geological data and information that contributes to attracting investors to enter into mining projects, and developing the mining system to include the responsible development of mineral ores and rare earth minerals and attracting international partnerships.

He pointed out that the focus is on metallic and precious metals (such as gold, copper, zinc, lead, and chromium). As for industrial minerals, the company focuses on quality projects with large-scale production and ensures economic feasibility, especially the industrial minerals production project in the Shuwaimiyah district with a specialised marine berth for export, which aims to produce 23 million tonnes of limestone and gypsum raw materials in the first phase, reaching 40 million tonnes in the future.

He pointed out that community acceptance of mining projects is a prerequisite for their success and sustainability, taking into account past experiences in some mining areas, stressing that the company has invested more in the current project to ensure the application of the best global environmental practices, such as the use of dry treatment technology for mining waste, which is an environmentally friendly method that protects groundwater and the surrounding area.

He said the company seeks to establish a strong supporting mining services sector that the local economy can rely on in the future. The company has already begun issuing tenders to localise specialised mining laboratories and develop and localise exploration drilling and surveying companies, in order to build an integrated and independent local services system.

He explained that the company aspires to develop an integrated

mining industry in the Sultanate of Oman, encompassing all aspects of the sector, from research and academic programmes to specialised service companies.

The success of this approach is evident in the provision of services by some local Drilling companies in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

He stated that the company's strategy is divided into three detailed sub-strategies that focus on maximising added value locally instead of exporting raw materials.

The first is the industrial minerals strategy, which is based on establishing specialised industrial complexes such as the Duqm Industrial Center, which focuses on industries based on salt and silica, and the Shalim Industrial Center, which specialises in industries based on limestone and gypsum, relying on the industrial minerals project in the Shuwaimiyah district as a main supplier of raw materials.

He said the second strategy focuses on chromium ore, which extends across the mountain range from the state of Shinas to the state of Wadi Bani Khalid, to bring the Sultanate of Oman back onto the map of global chromium exporters, and to establish an industrial centre for chromium that focuses on purifying and raising the purity of the ore. The company supports the establishment of chromium smelting areas in Sohar to produce "ferrochrome" as a final product with a higher market value compared to the primary raw material of chromium.

He added that the third sub-strategy currently under development is systematic exploration, where exploration areas have been divided into three main geological belts: the Samail belt, which includes ophiolite rocks rich in minerals such as copper and gold, the Hawasina belt, which includes important mineral deposits containing minerals such as copper and gold as well, and the southern region of Mahout, where exploration is currently underway for minerals such as zinc and lead.

He explained that the establishment of a new specialized metals trading arm for the "Omani Metals Trading Company" to be authorised to sell and trade gypsum and chromium ores in the Sultanate of Oman starting from June 2026 comes to maximise the benefit and economic return from these ores, develop new markets for them, and double the market share of the Sultanate of Oman in gypsum and chromium globally.

The CEO of Oman Mining Development Company spoke about the three levels of the mining sector: the upper level, which represents the exploration and mine development phases that the company undertakes mainly to reduce risks and attract investments; the middle level, which includes the basic industries that follow the extraction of the raw material, such as purification plants and smelters or refineries, as the company is looking for partnerships to implement them; and the lower level, which represents the downstream industries that are based on the processed raw materials resulting from smelters and refineries, and this area is entirely dedicated to private sector investments. – **ONA**

Full story at timesofoman.com/oman

BEDOUIN CULTURE AND HERITAGE



Cultural festival celebrating Dhofar's winter season opens

MUSCAT: The Wilayat of Maqshin in Oman's Dhofar Governorate is currently hosting the Mandhar Al-Dhabyan Cultural and Heritage Forum under the theme "Winter Gateway", a vibrant celebration of Bedouin culture, traditional arts, and local heritage. The event is part of a broader initiative to boost winter tourism and promote the economic empowerment of local communities.

Organised by the Office of the Wali of Maqshin in collaboration with the Directorate General of Culture, Sports, and Youth in Dhofar and various public and private entities, the forum features a rich programme of activities. Highlights include the Frankincense Caravan, poetry evenings, traditional Al-Mankous performances, and a crafts exhibition showcasing intricate models that reflect the desert environment and Bedouin lifestyle.

Speaking at the event, Awadh bin Salim Masan, Deputy Wali of Maqshin in the Mandhar Al-Dhabyan district, emphasised

the forum's goal of spotlighting the region's cultural, historical, and tourism assets. Located in the Rub' al Khali (Empty Quarter), the area is renowned for its sweeping sand dunes, winter climate, and deep-rooted Bedouin traditions.

Masan also noted ongoing government efforts to enhance infrastructure in the desert regions, including a 170-kilometre road network connecting the wilayat's centre with its districts and neighbouring areas an initiative aimed at supporting sustainable development and tourism growth. The forum enjoys strong backing from the Office of the Governor of Dhofar, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, Dhofar Municipality, and several public and private sector institutions. This support has helped position Maqshin as an emerging destination for tour operators, with increasing interest from visitors across Europe, Asia, and the United States.

Full story at timesofoman.com/oman

MOCIIP

Oman upgrades national quality framework

Times News Service

Muscat: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) and the Directorate General of Standards and Metrology (DGSM), continues its concerted efforts to develop the national standards and metrology system in line with the goals of the 10th Five-Year Development Plan and Oman Vision 2040. These efforts aim to strengthen the national quality infrastructure and enhance the competitiveness of the national economy at both regional and international levels. This project forms part of an integrated package of initiatives that includes regulating precious metals and valuable stones in local markets, developing the conformity assessment system, activating the role of standards in supporting development sectors through the Omani Standards Store, enhancing technical capabilities in the field of metrology, establishing the Oman Accreditation Centre, further developing the Omani Quality Mark, preparing a national strategy for standardisation and quality for the period 2026 to 2030, and implementing a quality management system in accordance with the international standard ISO 9001.

Imad bin Khamis Al Shukaili, Director General of DGSM, stated that the current year marked a significant milestone in the strategic achievements for the period 2025 to 2028. The Sultanate of Oman successfully signed memoranda of understanding with Bahrain, India, Belarus and Tunisia to enhance mutual recognition in the fields of precious metals and conformity assessment. The Sultanate of Oman has also strengthened its international presence by intensifying its participation in



global standardisation organisations, notably the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), the International Organisation of Legal Metrology, and the Arab Industrial Development, Standardisation and Mining Organisation. This engagement reinforces Oman's effective integration into the global quality system and strengthens its international standing.

In the area of standards development, Al Shukaili confirmed that the DGSM completed five new national projects covering traditional Omani vessels, frankincense products, cosmetics, energy efficiency for lighting products, and smart water metres. Nine new national standards were approved under the 2025 plan, alongside the adoption of 1,009 unified GCC standards, including 196 standards prepared by the Sultanate of Oman within the same plan. Key examples include standards for traditional Omani vessels, frankincense products, cosmetics, energy efficient lighting, smart water meters, smart electricity meters, smart water systems, sustainable building materials, packaged food safety, and basic medical devices. These efforts have strengthened Oman's presence within the Gulf

standardisation system, with the number of Omani representatives in Gulf technical committees rising to 170 members, enhancing Oman's role in shaping and developing unified regional standards.

Regarding conformity assessment, Al Shukaili noted that the Conformity Department continues to streamline procedures for importers and manufacturers. Over 135,000 e-certificates of conformity were issued during the year, in addition to 79 national conformity certificates and 68 "To Whom It May Concern" certificates. More than 1,163 energy efficiency labels were also issued for products covered under the second phase of the relevant technical regulation. In the field of accreditation, the media identity of the Oman Accreditation Centre was launched, five new testing laboratories were accredited, and more than 109 testing and calibration laboratories were registered or renewed. The number of registered conformity assessment bodies increased by 6% up to October 2025 compared to the previous year, while 173 conformity assessment bodies were licensed within a single year. This reflects the rapid growth of the national accreditation system and reinforces market confidence in the quality infrastructure.

In the area of capacity building, Al Shukaili explained that the Ministry implemented seven specialised programmes in cooperation with the Gulf Accreditation Centre as part of the project to establish the Oman Accreditation Centre. Over 250 trainees were trained over the past two years in the fields of registration, accreditation, testing and calibration, enhancing national competencies and improving market readiness. In addition, more than fifteen technical training programmes were

delivered bringing together several public-private sector entities, including SMEs.

In terms of supporting and developing the skills of entrepreneurs, Al Shukaili stated that the DGSM is preparing to launch a fast hallmarking service in precious metals laboratories and for the hallmarking of jewellery, bringing together SMEs in this project. A dedicated programme for entrepreneurs will also be introduced, covering manufacturing and import activities (Category I), in addition to conformity assessment, certification bodies and inspection bodies. This will open up wide investment opportunities in the supply of laboratory devices and equipment, as well as maintenance services, and will enhance the contribution of entrepreneurs to supporting the national quality system.

Al Shukaili noted that the National Calibration Centre has continued to play its vital role in verification and calibration activities. During this period, the national mass standard was launched as one of the most important standards within the metrology system. The Centre also carried out verification work on 1,121 fuel pumps through the mobile laboratory to ensure their compliance with approved specifications and standards in the Sultanate of Oman. In addition, during 2025 the Centre calibrated 955 measuring instruments and devices in the fields of mass, dimensions, temperature and volume, and prepared standards for smart electricity meters and smart water systems, thereby enhancing measurement accuracy and reinforcing confidence in the national quality infrastructure.

Full story at timesofoman.com/business

CREDIT GRANTED RISES

The total credit granted by the banking sector in the Sultanate of Oman witnessed an increase of 9 percent reaching OMR34.7 billion by the end of October 2025 while credit granted to the private sector recorded a growth of 5.8 percent to reach OMR28.3 billion.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX HITS 9-YEAR HIGH

The main index of MSX recorded its best level in more than 9 years during the week, when its trading on December 9 rose to 5,961 points, recording its best level since mid-May 2016, benefiting from high levels of demand for many stocks before the end of trading in 2025.

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Nizwa Industrial City attracts investments worth OMR12mn

With this new investments the total number of projects currently located in Nizwa Industrial City has increased to 190 projects with a total investment volume exceeding OMR514 million

MUSCAT: Nizwa Industrial City, affiliated with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn) has attracted 10 investment applications during the first half of 2025. Of this seven projects have localised with a total investment of OMR12 million. These projects will be established in an area exceeding 92,000 square metres.

With this new investments the total number of projects currently located in Nizwa Industrial City has increased to 190 projects with a total investment volume exceeding OMR514 million. More than 6,100



workers are employed in these projects with an Omanisation rate exceeding 45 percent occupying a total area of 7.2 million square metres within the industrial city.



eral of Nizwa Industrial City, said that Madayn continues to implement a number of vital projects in the industrial city. The completion rate of the Madayn Pioneer Complex project, which is being implemented in cooperation with

the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority, exceeds 80 percent by the end of the first half of 2025. The project is being established in the industrial city at a cost of OMR1.2 million and includes the construction

of 10 workshops for SMEs.

He further noted that Madayn has completed the tender for consultancy studies for the residential project, for general maintenance work for the facilities. He said that the preparation of the master plan for the fifth phase in an area of four million square metres has been completed.

He explained that the industrial city is preparing to open a number of factories in the field of medical and food supplies, oil and gas and iron fabrications, with a constant focus on environmental sustainability through increasing green spaces in cooperation with the Environment Authority, encouraging companies to use solar energy to reduce electricity consumption, and localising projects specialising in recycling aluminium and copper. - **UNA**

RBI DATA

India's forex reserves rise to \$687.26bn

NEW DELHI: India's foreign exchange reserves rose marginally, by \$1.033 billion in the week that ended December 5 to \$687.260 billion, driven by a jump in gold reserves, the Reserve Bank of India's latest 'Weekly Statistical Supplement' data showed.

Over the past few weeks, the forex kitty has been largely in a downtrend, except for a few.

Still, the country's foreign exchange (forex) kitty is hovering close to its all-time high of \$704.89 billion, reached in September 2024.

For the reported week (that ended December 5), India's foreign currency assets (FCA), the largest component of foreign exchange reserves, stood at \$556.880 billion, down \$151 million.

The RBI data showed that gold reserves currently stand at \$106.984 billion, up \$1.033 billion from the previous week.

The price of the safe-haven asset gold has been on a sharp uptrend over recent months, perhaps amid heightened global uncertainties and robust investment demand.

After the latest monetary policy review meeting, the RBI had said that the country's foreign exchange reserves were sufficient to cover more than 11 months of merchandise imports. Overall, India's external sector remains resilient, and the RBI is confident it can comfortably meet external financing requirements. - **ANI**

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MARKET

Muscat Stock Exchange hits 9-year high, market cap tops OMR32bn

The week saw the rise in prices of 64 securities, which created an optimistic atmosphere in the Muscat Stock Exchange and pushed the main index and sector indices to close higher

MUSCAT: The main index of the Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) recorded its best level in more than 9 years during the week, when its trading on December 9 rose to 5,961 points, recording its best level since mid-May 2016, benefiting from high levels of demand for many stocks before the end of trading in 2025.

The week saw the rise in prices of 64 securities, which created an optimistic atmosphere in the Muscat Stock Exchange and pushed the main index and sector indices to close higher. The financial sector index recorded the highest gains, rising 337 points, the industrial sector index rose 223 points, the services sector index recorded an increase of 50 points, and the Sharia index rose by about 12 points. The main index climbed to 5,949 points at the end of Thursday's trading, recording a weekly increase of 88 points.

The market capitalisation of securities listed on the Muscat



Stock Exchange rose to OMR32.10 billion by the end of the week's trading, recording weekly gains of OMR213.6 million.

However, the trading value declined by 7.5 percent in the week, but remained close to the OMR200 million mark, with increased demand for many leading stocks in the banking, industrial, and OQ Group sectors. Trading value reached OMR199.4 million, compared to OMR215.7 million during the week before, and the number of transactions executed decreased from 25,620 to 25,108.

Bank Muscat accounted for 19.3 percent of the total trading value after witnessing trades worth OMR38.6 million. Bank Sohar International came in second with trading worth OMR30.1 million, OQ Basic Industries came in third with trades worth OMR26.9 million, OQ Exploration and Production came in fourth with trades worth OMR26.4 million, while

Asyad Shipping came in fifth with trades valued at OMR21.5 million, representing 10.8 percent of the total trading value.

The building materials industry stock led the gainers, rising by 21.2 percent and closing at 80 baisa. Oman Arab Bank stock rose by 17.3 percent and closed at 176 baisa. National Gas stock climbed to 95 baisa, rising by 11.7 percent. Voltamp Energy stock rose to 1.40 rials, recording an increase of 11.2 percent. Ahli Bank stock rose by 11.1 percent and closed at 170 baisa.

The week also saw a decline in the prices of 10 securities, most notably the Lifa mandatory convertible bonds issued in 2024, which closed at 72 baisa, down 20 percent. Dhofar Food and Investment shares fell by 5.4 percent and closed at 70 baisa, Lifa Group shares dropped to 285 baisa, a decline of 5 percent, Galfar Engineering and Contracting shares fell by 2.9 percent and closed at 65 baisa, and Bank Dhofar

MSX extends gain in weekly trading

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Omani stock market delivered another positive weekly performance, continuing its momentum with a 1.51% gain and it remains one of the best-performing markets in the region, reaching multi-year highs, according to an analyst. "Regional markets were mostly positive this week as sentiment improved with the market pricing in a Federal Reserve rate cut," said Joseph Dahrieh, Managing Principal at Tickmill.

"Gulf central banks followed suit, including Oman, cutting interest rates by 25 basis points to mirror the US Federal Reserve, a move that is favourable to the local economies and corporate earnings," he added.

Market sentiment could be further bolstered by Oman announcing \$5.16 billion in new investment opportunities to build a semiconductor manufacturing hub, signalling a major push into tech diversification, said Joseph Dahrieh. "This could provide a boost for industrial and logistics stocks



expected to support this infrastructure, representing a further step in the country's efforts to diversify beyond oil."

"Additionally, sentiment could find a boost in the improving economic ties with India with the approval of a Free Trade Agreement, which could help sustain market momentum next week," he further added.

Conversely, lower oil prices trading near this year's lows present a risk to the Omani

stock market and economy, as is the case for regional economies. The bearish outlook of a supply glut in 2026 could continue to weigh on crude prices.

Sector performance was once again positive. The Financial sector was the market's top performer this week, with the index rising by 3.57%. Oman Arab Bank was a standout performer, surging 17.33%. Other significant movers included Ahli Bank, which climbed 11.11%, and Bank Nizwa, which gained 4.72%. Bank Muscat also finished higher, up by 0.29%.

The Industrial sector posted a gain of 2.99%. The heavy-weight OQ Base Industries was higher by 2.20%. Voltamp Energy posted a double-digit gain, jumping 11.23%, while Oman Cables Industry increased by 2.55%.

The Services sector finished higher by 2.08%. The sector's positive performance was backed by Asyad Shipping, which advanced 1.67%, Abraj Energy Services, which jumped 8.36%, and Oman Telecom, which increased by 0.47%.

REPORT

Geopolitical risks top boardroom concerns for Indian companies

NEW DELHI: Geopolitical instability has emerged as the biggest future risk for India Inc., with nearly 50 per cent of CXOs ranking it as the most severe threat over the next five years, according to a report, 'The Global Risk Atlas - New Realities' by MGC Global Risk Advisory.

The report, based on insights from over 125 CXOs across 45 economies spanning five regions with sectors including manufacturing, services, BFSI, digital, consumer and infrastructure, found that 70 per cent of business leaders expect "steady volatility" across six of nine major risk categories, while 59 per cent identified cyberattacks and data breaches as a top board-level concern.

The Atlas also noted that AI governance has overtaken ESG as a key boardroom priority, driven by concerns around model bias, misinformation and regulatory uncertainty. Nearly two-thirds of companies acknowledged significant gaps in talent, innovation and digital capabilities, which

could amplify future shocks.

Monish Gaurav Chatrath, Managing Partner, MGC Global Risk Advisory, said that geopolitical shifts, technological disruption and macroeconomic realignment are converging into a new global risk architecture, requiring companies to move from episodic crisis response to institutionalised resilience. "We are at a decisive inflection point where geopolitical shifts, technological disruption and macroeconomic realignment are converging into a new risk architecture," Chatrath noted.

According to the Atlas, geopolitical risk exposure is highest for multinational companies, manufacturers and B2B firms dependent on cross-border capital, energy and supply chains, while domestic firms face indirect impacts through currency, commodity and demand channels.

The study maps evolving risk trajectories across 45 economies and highlights that Indian companies have entered an era of "permacrisis". -ANI

DATA

Credit granted by Oman's banking sector rises by 9% to OMR34.7bn

MUSCAT: The total credit granted by the banking sector in the Sultanate of Oman witnessed an increase of 9 percent reaching OMR34.7 billion by the end of October 2025 while credit granted to the private sector recorded a growth of 5.8 percent to reach OMR28.3 billion.

Data issued by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO) indicated that this credit was distributed across various sectors, with the non-financial corporate sector receiving the largest share at 46.8 percent, followed by the individuals sector at 44.7 percent, while the remaining percentage was distributed between the financial corporate sector at 5.7 percent and other sectors at 2.8 percent.

The data further showed that total deposits in the banking sector recorded a growth of 3.5 percent reaching approximately OMR33 billion by the end of October 2025. Within this total, private sector deposits in the banking system increased by 9.4 percent to reach OMR22.3 billion.



Regarding the distribution of the total deposit base for the private sector, statistics showed that the personal sector accounted for

the largest share at 50.4 percent, followed by the non-financial corporate sector and the financial corporate sector with shares of

30.3 percent and 17.2 percent respectively, while the remaining 2.1 percent was distributed among other sectors. -ONA

TAMKEEN INITIATIVE

OCCI to launch initiative to help SMEs to compete for government tenders

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) will launch the Tamkeen initiative on 16 December at the Chamber's headquarters in Muscat, in cooperation with the Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit, the Authority for Projects, Tenders and Local Content, and the SMEs Development Authority (Riyada).

The Tamkeen initiative is one of the key initiatives stemming from OCCI's strategic directions, which focus on three main pillars: improving the business environment, expanding the base of economic diversification, and strengthening partnership in developing the governorates economically.

The initiative aims to implement two training programmes during 2025 and 2026 across vari-



ous governorates of the Sultanate of Oman, with the objective of preparing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and enhancing their ability to benefit from the 10% quota allocated to them

within government procurement and tenders.

Sheikh Faisal bin Abdullah Al Rawas, Chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, affirmed that the launch of this



initiative reflects the Chamber's commitment to supporting and empowering the private sector, particularly SMEs, which represent a fundamental pillar of the national economy. He noted that the upcoming phase requires greater readiness from this sector to participate effectively in both government and private projects.

Al Rawas explained that the Chamber is working to enable SMEs to enter the procurement and tendering market efficiently, in



a way that enhances local content and expands business opportunities for young Omanis. He stressed that this initiative aligns with the Chamber's role in supporting the achievement of Oman Vision 2040 targets and in strengthening economic diversification, particularly in promising sectors with direct impact on economic development.

For his part, Zakariya bin Abdullah Al Saadi, Chief Executive Officer of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, stated

that the "Tamkeen" initiative is one of the key outcomes of OCCI's strategic development workshop, which is based on three fundamental pillars: improving the business environment, expanding the base of economic diversification, and strengthening partnership in developing the governorates economically. He noted that in February this year, the Chamber launched 14 qualitative

Al Saadi added that the importance of this initiative stems from the deep understanding that SMEs are not merely a supporting component of the national economy, but a core driver of development, a wide field for innovation and new solution development, a vital source for youth employment, and an active contributor to enhancing local content and supporting national supply chains.


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Indian Male, 15+ yrs Sales exp. (IT/Software). Open to Sales/BD roles in any industry. Valid Oman D/L. Contact: 94110178

Diploma in Electrical Engineering looking for Fire Fighting site supervisor/suitable job. Contact: 95933453, Email: haquefaizan3786@gmail.com

Experienced Biomedical Engineers seeking opportunities in Oman. Presently in Oman & available for immediate joining. Email: asmathalipvl@gmail.com Contact: +968 72031225

Project Manager (Civil) Indian, 18 yr GCC experience, valid D/L and transferable visa, can join immediately. Contact: 97723786

Project Manager Civil seasoned professional with strong consultancy and construction expertise. Open for suitable opportunities. Contact 93455363 | WA +966 56 373 2589 (WhatsApp)

Electrical Engineer, experience 18 yrs in Oman. Contact 98148034

Sales Engineer Indian Male, 7 yrs experience in sales. Seeking suitable job opportunities NOC & Oman D/L available. Contact 94150903 Email:vaseem9633@gmail.com

B. Tech Civil Engineer with 15+ yrs experience. Society Engineering certificate valid Omani D/L. Looking for a suitable position. Available for immediate join. NOC available. Mob: 78790123, 91693008

BE Civil Engr. Indian Male, 11yrs experience in Oman, holding Oman D/L seeks placement. Contact: 93867573, Email: pineasdas@gamil.com

LOGISTICS

Indian Male Graduate with 25 yrs of proven experience in Car rental, fleet Management & logistics. Currently seeking for Senior/ middle management position. Contact: 92152334.

Indian Male 45 yrs, with 20 yrs of experience in commercial, purchase and warehouse Logistic operations, seeks operational job. Mob: 91425510

Indian Male 24 yrs , Commerce graduate 1.5 yrs experience in logistics, procurement and sales in reputed MNC in Oman. Valid Oman D/L. Ready to join immediately. Contact +968 91121694 Email issacantony2002@gmail.com

PURCHASE/PROCUREMENT

Procurement Engineer 19 yrs experience construction and trading. whatsapp: +96895839964

Indian Male 40 yrs Bcom MBA having 13 yrs experience in procurement UAE & Oman with valid UAE D/L. seeking suitable opportunities. Contact: +971529546753

JOB WANTED

ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

Indian Male Chartered Accountant Inter holder and M. com graduate with more than 8 yrs Oman experience Looking for suitable position. D/L and NOC. Contact 78793414 Email iqbalpmr@gmail.com

Indian (M), 28, Accountant with overall exp. 3 yrs valid D/L. Contact: 78624277

Sri Lankan Accountant, reading CA. 3+ yrs of experience. Expertise in accounting, audit, bookkeeping, VAT, finalization. Contact: +968 76297279

Indian male, MBA finance, 15 yrs experience in accounting up to finalisation, VAT submission. Immediate joining. Contact: 96290882, Email: ajithakes@gmail.com

Indian male, M.com (Finance) 12 years accounting experience in Oman. Handling accounts up to finalization independently & Business development. NOC & D/L available Contact: 99859141,

Accountant looking for job. Contact: 75024166

Highly skilled chief accountant looking for suitable position. Contact: 79888153

Indian Male, MBA, 17 years experienced in key accounts, project sales, business development looking for suitable opportunities. Contact: 92790532

MBA Finance Senior accountant, 13-yrs GCC experience looking for a job upto finalization. Contact: 98869499

JOB WANTED

ADMINISTRATION

Indian Male, 15 yrs experience in Oman seeks job for admin, secretary or any suitable post. Holding Oman D/L M: 94019955.

Indian (M) 29 yrs, MBA graduate with 4 yrs experience in operations, stores management, office administration, yard management, accounts, finance and graphic designing. Looking for suitable job. Contact: 78439875

ARCHITECT

Architect, Interior Designer having more than 8+ yrs of experience with design and engineering consultants. Contact: 95759832, Email: ar.ahmedfaizal@gmail.com

DRIVER

Driver with 25 yrs experience, PDO licence looking for job. Contact: 99116288

EDUCATION/TRAINING

Indian Female, completed MCA and also having experience in teaching, available in Oman on family visa, looking for a suitable job. Contact: +91 79090343/ +968 94117967, Email: induchandran01@gmail.com

SALES/MARKETING

Indian Male, 15+ yrs Sales exp. (IT/Software). Open to Sales/BD roles in any industry. Valid Oman D/L. Contact: 94110178

Indian, MBA, 20yrs of experience in Sales(FMCG/retail) with D/L seeks suitable placement. Contact: 95548480

MANAGER

Workshop Manager with Electromechanical experience in heavy equipments, auto fabrication workshop, skilled in maintenance, inventory control with Oman D/L available immediately. Contact : 78473341

Accounting Manager, Indian (M), 43yrs, 18+ yrs in Oman, D/L & NOC. Contact: 76432203

Indian Male, MBA. 12 yrs of experience as (branch Manager & key accounts executive) looking for suitable position. Contact: 98132055

Indian Male (MBA) with 5 yrs experience looking for a business development, marketing manager role. Contact: 99470508

Indian Male Procurement Executive with 11 yrs of experience in Oman, holding Oman D/L available in Muscat for immediate joining. Contact 92345876

Indian Male 41 yrs MBA, B.com having 13 yrs experience in procurement UAE & Oman with valid UAE D/L, seeking suitable opportunities in Oman. Contact: +971529546753

MEDICAL

Microbiologist, quality assurance executive, Indian female (M.Sc) having 5yrs experience in microbiological testing, Quality assurance, documentation in food Industry. Looking for a suitable job. Contact 95603424 Email: annmariasunny22@gmail.com

Indian Female Diploma in Pharmacy more than 15 yrs experience in Oman, looking for suitable position in Muscat location. Contact 76460156 Email id: chandrakalasunilkumar68@gmail.com

Severe weather kills 14 in Gaza as flooded tents worsen crisis

Aid group Oxfam said widespread flooding has submerged tents, forcing families to wade through sewage, mud and debris with little to no protection

GAZA: Severe weather over the past 72 hours has claimed at least 14 lives in Gaza, including three children, as heavy rain and cold conditions battered an already devastated enclave, CNN reported, citing the Gaza-based Health Ministry statement.

This came amid worsening con-



ditions for Palestinians who have been living in tents and temporary shelters for nearly two years due to the ongoing war that has left much of Gaza in ruins.

Aid group Oxfam said widespread flooding has submerged tents, forcing families to wade through sewage, mud and debris with little to no protection from

the elements, as per CNN.

In a statement on Saturday, the organisation said the dire situation is a “direct result of the systematic obstruction of aid,” leaving civilians exposed during extreme weather.

Many residents described desperate conditions as rain destroyed their few remaining be-

longings. “The mattress, the blanket, everything, even the clothes, have become soaked with water,” Um Mustafa said on Friday. “Bring me a mattress. Bring me a tent. I beg you, for God’s sake, help me.”

She said the only food she had left -- a bag of flour and rice -- was ruined after being soaked, triggering panic in the middle of the

night. “I went out screaming to the neighbours, asking them for help,” she said. “All my children became soaked by the rainwater.”

Authorities and residents said tents, makeshift shelters and even damaged buildings collapsed while families were inside. Structures weakened by repeated Israeli bombardment during the war could not withstand the heavy rain. An eight-month-old baby, Rahaf, died of hypothermia, her family stated.

According to the Hamas-run government media office in Gaza, more than 27,000 tents were swept away or flooded during the storm. The office described the situation as a “complex humanitarian disaster” affecting at least 250,000 people.

Israel and Hamas reached a truce in October that brought the two-year war to a halt and allowed for the release of all living Israeli hostages. Israel also permitted humanitarian aid to enter Gaza as part of the first phase of the deal.

However, Oxfam said Israeli au-

thorities “continue to block the entry of basic shelter materials, fuel and water infrastructure,” warning that civilians are being exposed to “entirely preventable harm.”

“When access is denied, storms become deadly. This suffering is being manufactured by policy, not weather,” the aid group said.

The Coordination of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT), the Israeli agency tasked with facilitating aid distribution in Gaza, said in a statement that Israel is “committed to” and “fully upholds” its “obligation to transfer humanitarian aid trucks in accordance with the pact.”

“In this framework, hundreds of trucks enter each day carrying food, water, fuel, gas, medicines, medical equipment, tents and shelter equipment,” the agency said. “Over the last few months, COGAT coordinated with the international community and facilitated the transfer of close to 270,000 tents and tarpaulins directly to the residents of the Gaza Strip.” -ANI

GLOBAL DISPUTES

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif calls for peaceful disputes’ resolution

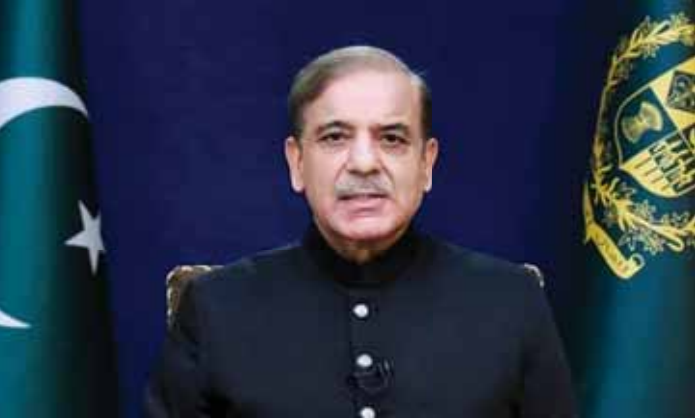
ASHGABAT: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to the peaceful settlement of global disputes, while urging the international community to press the Afghan Taliban to honour their international obligations and curb terrorist groups operating from Afghan soil.

“Peaceful resolution of disputes is a cornerstone of Pakistan’s foreign diplomacy. It is in the same spirit that Pakistan supported the Gaza Peace Plan and its subsequent endorsement by the UN Security Council,” the prime minister said in his address to the international forum held in connection with the International Year of Peace and Trust 2025, the International Day of Neutrality, and the anniversary of Turkmenistan’s permanent neutrality.

The prime minister pointed out that Pakistan began the year by assuming its place as non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, where the country was striving to uphold global peace and security.

“While we persevere in this quest for peace, the scourge of terrorism is, however, raising its head yet again, and this time, unfortunately, Afghan soil,” he said urging the international community to press the Afghan Taliban regime to fulfill its international obligations and commitments and rein in terrorist elements operating from its territory.

Meanwhile, he expressed gratitude to the brotherly countries-



Qatar, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Iran- for their sincere desire and efforts to achieve permanent ceasefire, “which, as I speak, is still very fragile”.

He said the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 2788 earlier this year was a strong endorsement of Pakistan’s vision for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The prime minister hoped that as part of the group of eight Arab Islamic countries, the ongoing peace efforts in the Middle East will ultimately protect and save the lives of innocent Palestinians, ensuring a lasting and permanent ceasefire, allow the flow of critical humanitarian aid, and help in the reconstruction of Gaza.

He also reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to support all efforts aimed at upholding the inalienable right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, as well as

for the brave and resilient Kashmiri people.

The prime minster noted that the pursuit of lasting peace was intrinsically linked to the path of sustainable development. In this regard, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents a universal blueprint for a better and peaceful world. Socioeconomic development and the welfare of our people are my government’s foremost priority.

“We have made significant strides in several key areas, including by advancing financial inclusion, bringing women and the marginalised into the economic mainstream,” he said adding that in the face of global warming, Pakistan had demonstrated its strong commitment to undertake cleaner and greener solutions, transforming our landscape and setting a global example in ecosystem restoration.

“However, like many develop-

ing nations, our quest for sustainable development is facing the headwinds of climate-induced disasters and inequities in international economic relations.”

PM Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan had suffered in 2023 devastating floods, faced human life losses and economic losses, and then again this year it faced catastrophic situations because of climate change devastations.

The prime minister added that climate change, poverty and inequality were not isolated challenges. These are transnational threats that demand international solutions built on the foundation of shared responsibility and unity of purpose.

“Access to advanced technologies, especially digital technologies, must also be equitable and without any kind of discrimination,” he added.

He also appealed the global leaders to let this forum serve as a genuine call to action and urgent action for a new paradigm of international relations, where we move from zero-sum mindsets to purposeful cooperation.

“Let us invest in connectivity, not just as conduits for transportation of goods, but as bridges for people, ideas and prosperity.”

Earlier, the prime minister felicitated the leadership of Turkmenistan on the 30th anniversary of its permanent neutrality and on the success of its initiative for designation of 2025 as the International Year of Peace and Trust by the United Nations. -APP

IN BEIJING

India, China hold constructive diplomatic talks

BEIJING : India and China held a fresh round of diplomatic consultations in Beijing as Joint Secretary (East Asia) Sujit Ghosh visited China from December 11 to December 12, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

According to a release issued on Friday, the MEA stated that during the visit, Ghosh called on Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong and held detailed discussions with the Director General of the Department of Asian Affairs at the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 11.

The talks were described as constructive and forward-looking, with both sides underscoring the importance of the strategic guidance provided by the leaders of India and China.

Both sides also positively assessed recent efforts aimed at stabilising and rebuilding bilateral ties, with a particular focus on people-centric exchanges.

“The discussions were constructive and forward looking. Both sides highlighted the importance of strategic guidance of the leaders of the two countries, and made a positive assessment of the progress in stabilizing and rebuilding bilateral ties, prioritizing people centric engagements,” the release stated.

The two delegations also reviewed the planned exchanges and activities for 2026, while the Indian side pressed for the early

resolution of pending export control issues.

“The two sides took stock of the exchanges and activities planned for the coming year. The Indian side emphasised on the need for early resolution of outstanding issues pertaining to export control. Regional and global developments of mutual interest were also briefly touched upon,” the release added.

During his stay in Beijing, Ghosh also met the Director General (Asian Affairs) of the Chinese Ministry of Commerce, where the two sides discussed bilateral trade and commercial matters.

Online visa application

The Chinese Embassy in India is set to launch the online visa application system on December 22, Chinese Ambassador to India Xu Feihong said on Monday.

Sharing the details in a post on X, he said that the applicants could fill out the form and upload application materials online by visiting “Notice Regarding Online Visa Processing Approval- China Online Visa Application System will be officially launched by the Chinese Embassy in India on December 22, 2025. Applicants could enjoy convenience of filling out the form and uploading application materials online by visiting https://visaforchina.cn/DEL3_EN/qianzhengywu. Welcome to visit this website for more details,” the post read. -ANI

US-LED PLAN

Zelenskyy to visit Berlin for talks with Merz, European allies

BERLIN: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will visit Berlin on Monday for talks with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and “many” other NATO and European allies, a German government spokesperson said on Friday.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron are also reportedly expected at the meeting to discuss the latest developments in a US-led plan to end the war in Ukraine.

On Friday, Merz said there is still a major need to resolve questions in international efforts to end the war and provide security guarantees for Ukraine.

“The discussions are being conducted very intensively these days,” Merz said. “We are trying to involve the US government in the talks we are having among ourselves, as well as with the Ukrainian government and the Ukrainian president.”

Merz said talks about security guarantees mainly focus on strengthening the Ukrainian military in the long run and ensuring the country can protect itself on its own.

“We are ready to make our own

contributions to this. Contributions from the US side will also be needed,” Merz said, adding that the question of how and in what details this will be integrated into an overall concept remains open.

EU membership ‘political anchor’ in Ukraine peace deal, EU commissioners says

Ukraine could join the European Union as early as January 2027 under the latest US plan to end the war with Russia. European Commissioner for Enlargement Marta Kos told DW about the possibility of Ukraine joining the EU and the move being part of the peace plan.

“When we speak about the Ukrainian EU membership, for me this is a political anchor of the security guarantees,” she said, adding that integration into the EU was the only way “to secure the lasting and fair peace.”

On whether 2027 was a realistic timing, Kos said it all still depended on how quickly Ukraine can implement reforms and the input from the bloc’s 27 current member states on the topic of accepting Ukraine.

“We can take care that Ukraine will be democratic,” she said. “We



can take care that the people would really feel the benefits of being a member of the EU.”

EU will move Ukraine membership forward despite Hungary veto

In an unprecedented move, the European Commission will move Ukraine’s membership process

forward at a technical level despite Hungary blocking official talks on accession.

Under the new plan, the Ukrainian government will push ahead with reforms needed to meet EU eligibility criteria. EU staffers will assess Kyiv’s progress in aligning with the bloc’s laws and standards in areas like judicial independence

unofficially — circumventing Budapest’s veto on opening formal negotiations.

The EU’s enlargement commissioner, Marta Kos, told DW she received “clear instructions” to advance Ukraine’s bid from EU ministers meeting in Lviv earlier this week.

“I’m very, very happy and encouraged to go even faster in this process,” she said.

Hungary’s backing will still be required for any final decisions on membership, with unanimous support from all current members necessary for any new countries to join the currently 27-member bloc.

“At some point, we will have to find unanimity,” Kos acknowledged when pressed on the feasibility of the plan. “But for the time being, for the technical part, we can go on.”

Control of the city of Pokrovsk

Russian forces have claimed control of the city of Pokrovsk in Ukraine’s Donetsk region after months of fierce fighting, while Ukraine says it still holds a sliver of the city. The battle for this stra-

tegic crossroads could open the way to the cities of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk. Moscow now controls 19% of Ukraine, but very limited gains have come at a huge human cost.

As winter bites, Russia pounds energy infrastructure, while Ukraine strikes oil facilities and tankers. Both sides escalate as the United States and Europe prepare different peace plans.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan met Russian leader Vladimir Putin in Turkmenistan, proposing a limited ceasefire in the Ukraine-Russia war.

The plan focuses on protecting energy facilities and ports.

Erdogan’s office said the two leaders also discussed broader peace efforts and the EU’s freezing of Russian assets.

Ankara recently condemned drone attacks on tankers in the Black Sea, calling them a dangerous escalation.

On Thursday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Turkey is working on a ceasefire plan tied to energy infrastructure and shipping. He said Kyiv supports the idea and is ready for talks. -DW

DEADLY BORDER CLASHES

Thailand, Cambodia agree to renew truce, says Trump

Washington DC: Following a week of deadly border clashes that have killed atleast 20 and displaced around half a million people, US President Donald Trump on Friday (local time) announced that Thailand and Cambodia once again agreed to immediately renew their ceasefire agreement, while crediting his personal intervention for the accord as well as Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's assistance. In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, the US President stated that he had a "very good" conversation with Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, and that both leaders agreed to "cease all shooting effective this

evening."

He noted that both leaders also agreed to return to the "original Peace Accord" signed back in October in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as Trump and Ibrahim as witnesses for the deal.

"I had a very good conversation this morning with the Prime Minister of Thailand, Anutin Charnvirakul, and the Prime Minister of Cambodia, Hun Manet, concerning the very unfortunate reawakening of their long-running War. They have agreed to CEASE all shooting effective this evening, and go back to the original Peace Accord made with me, and them, with the help of the Great Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim," his post read.



Latest violence Trump further described the roadside bomb incident that triggered the latest violence as an accident but acknowledged Thailand's strong retaliation and hailed the

revival of peace ties as a major diplomatic achievement.

"The roadside bomb that originally killed and wounded numerous Thai Soldiers was an accident, but Thailand nevertheless retaliated very strongly. Both Countries are ready for PEACE and continued Trade with the United States of America. It is my Honor to work with Anutin and Hun in resolving what could have evolved into a major War between two otherwise wonderful and prosperous Countries! I would also like to thank the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Anwar Ibrahim, for his assistance in this very important matter," Trump's post added.

The fresh clashes between the two sides started earlier this week

after Thailand launched airstrikes on Cambodian military positions on Monday morning after Cambodian shelling killed a Thai soldier and injured several others along the tense border region, as reported by the Bangkok Post.

According to the Royal Thai Army, Cambodian forces fired shells and rockets at Thai military and civilian areas around 7 am in the Chong Bok area of Nam Yuen district. One Thai soldier was killed, and four others were injured in that attack.

Major General Winthai Suvarree said Thai troops returned fire and later used fighter jets to strike Cambodian locations to halt the incoming attacks, Bangkok Post reported. -ANI

Resolution in US House to end Trump's 50% tariffs on India

The resolution is spearheaded by Representatives Deborah Ross, Marc Veasey, and Raja Krishnamoorthi



WASHINGTON DC : Three members of the US House of Representatives on Friday introduced a resolution aimed at terminating President Donald Trump's national emergency declaration that imposed tariffs of up to 50 per cent on imports from India, calling the measures "illegal" and harmful to American workers, consumers, and bilateral ties.

The resolution, spearheaded by Representatives Deborah Ross, Marc Veasey, and Raja Krishnamoorthi, follows a bipartisan Sen-

ate measure to end similar tariffs on Brazil and curb the President's use of emergency powers to raise import duties.

According to the release, the resolution seeks to rescind the additional 25 per cent "secondary" duties imposed on India on August 27, 2025, on top of earlier

reciprocal tariffs, which together raised duties on many Indian-origin products to 50 per cent under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA).

"North Carolina's economy is deeply connected to India through trade, investment, and a vibrant Indian American community,"

said Congresswoman Ross, highlighting that Indian companies have invested over a billion dollars in the state, creating thousands of jobs in sectors such as life sciences and technology, while North Carolina manufacturers export hundreds of millions of dollars in goods to India annually.

"India is an important cultural, economic, and strategic partner, and these illegal tariffs are a tax on everyday North Texans who are already struggling with rising costs," Congressman Veasey added.

Meanwhile, Indian-American Congressman Krishnamoorthi said the tariffs were "counterproductive, disrupt supply chains, harm American workers, and drive up costs for consumers," stressing that ending them would help strengthen US-India economic and security cooperation.

"Instead of advancing American interests or security, these duties disrupt supply chains, harm American workers, and drive up costs for consumers. Ending these damaging tariffs will allow the United States to engage with India to advance our shared economic

and security needs," Krishnamoorthi added.

The resolution is part of a broader push by congressional Democrats to challenge Trump's unilateral trade measures and reset America's relations with India.

Earlier in October, Ross, Veasey, and Krishnamoorthi, along with Congressman Ro Khanna and 19 other Members of Congress, had urged the President to reverse his tariff policies and repair strained bilateral ties with India.

"Ending Trump's India tariffs is part of a broader effort by congressional Democrats to reclaim Congress' constitutional authority over trade and to stop the President from using emergency powers to unilaterally impose his misguided trade policies," the release stated.

Earlier in August, Trump imposed a 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods starting August 1, followed by another 25 per cent increase days later, citing India's continued purchase of Russian oil, taking the total to 50 per cent, claiming that it fuels Moscow's war purpose in Ukraine. -ANI

Berlin sends soldiers to fortify Poland border

BERLIN: Germany has announced plans for its armed forces, the Bundeswehr, to help secure Poland's eastern border with Belarus and Russia.

The Defence Ministry said on Saturday that several dozen German soldiers were set to join Poland's Operation Eastern Shield from April 2026, with the mission initially running until the end of 2027.

A ministry spokesperson said the core task of the German troops in northern and eastern Poland would be engineering work.

Building positions

This was described as building positions, digging trenches, laying barbed wire and constructing anti-tank obstacles.

No further duties are planned.

The operation has been underway since May 2024 in border areas with Moscow ally Belarus and Russia's Kaliningrad exclave.

The measures are aimed at strengthening defences against a possible attack on North Atlantic Treaty Organisation member Poland (NATO). -DW

EXERCISE HARIMAU SHAKTI

India, Malaysia boost defence ties

NEW DELHI: With the joint military exercise 'Harimau Shakti' in full swing between India and Malaysia, the troops from both armies are currently undertaking a range of joint training activities aimed at enhancing interoperability and operational preparedness, as per the Indian Army.

According to the Indian Army, these include Army Martial Arts Routine (AMAR) drills, helicopter slithering and low-hover jumps from MI-17 helicopters, and counter-IED familiarisation through structured briefings and visits to specialised training facilities, strengthening skills relevant to contemporary operational environments.

The exercise also features a joint weapon and equipment display showcasing company

and battalion-level special weapons, including Next Generation Equipment and Weapons, alongside activities focused on physical fitness and cohesion, such as yoga and friendly sports events.

Defence cooperation

Joint Exercise Harimau Shakti continues to reinforce professional bonds, mutual trust and defence cooperation between the Indian Army and the Malaysian Army through realistic training and shared experiences, the Army said.

The fifth edition of the Joint Military exercise "Exercise Harimau Shakti -2025" is being conducted in Mahajan Field Firing Range, Rajasthan. The exercise is being conducted from December 5 - 18. -ANI

AGAINST GOVERNMENT'S 2026 BUDGET

Thousands demonstrate in Italy

PARIS: Thousands of people took to the streets across Italy on Friday, for a national strike that was called by the country's largest union to protest the government's 2026 budget.

The strike comes as the budget is expected to be discussed next week and must be approved by the country's parliament by the end of this year.

Italy's CGIL union has estimated that some 61% of all public and private sector workers participated in the strike.

"The majority of the workers who keep this country going don't agree with and don't accept this government's budget," CGIL chief Maurizio Landini told a rally in Florence.

"Today shows more clearly than ever that we need a change," he added.

Demonstrations the latest in a



slew of protests to have hit Italy

The demonstrations were the latest in a slew of protests that have hit Italy in recent months. Italians have taken to the streets to reject the government's economic policies and its support for Israel.

The budget is being put forth by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and her right-wing Brothers of

Italy party.

Although Meloni's party, which governs under a stable coalition, still tops opinion polls, some recent surveys have shown a decline in the government's popularity.

CGIL, which represents 5 million workers, half of whom are pensioners, argues that the new

budget would "worsen people's living and working conditions."

Along with other unions, CGIL has rejected planned increases in defense spending. The unions are calling on the government to invest more in healthcare and education, as well as take measures to bolster salaries and pensions.

Meloni's government has responded to the discontent by saying the budget has been well-received by financial markets and ratings agencies, arguing that it strengthens Italy's public finances, while lowering taxes for middle earners.

Meloni and Transport Minister Matteo Salvini responded to the strike plans when they were agreed to last month, making fun of the union for organizing the strike as usual on a Friday, implying that it was an excuse for a long weekend. -DW

TREATING SEVERE STROKES

AIIMS Delhi launches India's first advanced brain stent trial

NEW DELHI: AIIMS Delhi has made history in stroke care with India's first dedicated clinical trial of the advanced Supernova Stent, a brain stent designed for treating severe strokes. The GRASSROOT Trial results, published in the Journal of NeuroInterventional Surgery (JNIS), a publication of the prestigious British Medical Journal group, demonstrate excellent safety and efficacy.

AIIMS New Delhi was the national coordinating centre and the lead enrolling site for the GRASSROOT Trial, India's first clinical trial of a new and advanced stroke treatment device, the Supernova Stent.

"This trial is a turning point for stroke treatment in India," said Dr Shailesh B Gaikwad, Professor & Head, Department of Neuroimaging & Interventional Neuroradi-

ology, AIIMS New Delhi and National Principal Investigator of the GRASSROOT Trial.

Earlier this year, data from the GRASSROOT trial were accepted by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) and the Supernova stent-retriever was approved for routine use in India. This is the nation's first stroke device cleared based on a domestic clinical trial.

The approval follows the GRASSROOT India trial, which confirmed the device's safety and efficacy in treating life-threatening strokes. Conducted across eight centres, the trial marks a milestone for the Make-in-India initiative and positions India as a global player in advanced stroke care.

Noting that it produced world-class clinical evidence entirely within the country, Dr Ashutosh



Jadhav (Chief Scientific Officer, Gravity) added that the effort built a "robust framework for future large-scale, high-quality trials." At the same time, Dr. Deepti Vibha (Professor of Neurology, AIIMS, New Delhi) emphasised the role of patients and families whose participation will "bring faster, more

affordable treatments to millions."

Dr Shashvat M. Desai, Chief Technology Officer at Gravity Medical Technology, described the approval as "more than just a regulatory milestone." He remarked, "This achievement demonstrates that India can design and deliver clinical trials of global significance,

accelerating access to advanced therapies while upholding equity."

He further noted that the trial and subsequent device approval stand as a testament to the expertise of Indian leaders such as Dr Gaikwad and his team, who bring over three decades of experience in advancing stroke treatment.

Dr Gaikwad thanked the entire team involved in this trial, with significant contributions from Dr Manjari Tripathi, Dr Rohit Bhatia, Dr Achal Srivastava, Dr Vishnu, Dr Awadh K Pandit, Dr Rajesh Singh, Dr Ayush Agrawal & Dr Savvasachi Jain (AIIMS team members). Developed by Gravity Medical Technology, Supernova is designed for India's diverse patient population, where strokes often occur at younger ages than in the West.

"The device has already treated more than 300 patients in South-east Asia and will now be manufactured and is available in India at affordable prices, offering new hope to the 1.7 million Indians who suffer strokes each year" concluded Dr Dileep Yavagal, Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery, University of Miami, and the Global Principal Investigator. -ANI

SPORTS

A Messi affair in Kolkata



Chaos erupted at Salt Lake Stadium in the eastern Indian city of Kolkata during Lionel Messi's visit, as thousands of frustrated fans — disappointed by poor management and limited access to the football icon — began throwing bottles, chairs and other objects from the stands

KOLKATA: Angry fans attending Lionel Messi's tour of India ripped up seats and threw items towards the pitch after his appearance at Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium on Saturday.

Thousands of adoring supporters had paid up to 12,000 rupees (£100; \$133) to catch a glimpse of the football star, but were left disappointed when he emerged to walk around the pitch, and was obscured by a large group of officials and celebrities.

When the Argentina and Inter Miami forward was whisked away early by security after around 20 minutes, elements of the crowd turned hostile.

West Bengal's chief minister, Mamata Banerjee said she was "deeply disturbed and shocked" by the events.

Messi is in India for his 'GOAT tour', a series of promotional

events in Kolkata, Hyderabad, Mumbai and New Delhi.

His tour began with the unveiling of a 70ft statue of himself in Kolkata, which had been assembled over the course of 27 days by a 45-strong crew.

It was unveiled virtually due to security reasons, meaning thousands of fans instead travelled to the city's stadium for a chance to see the footballer.

They were chanting, buying jerseys and wearing "I love Messi" headbands.

Messi initially walked around the stadium waving to fans, but after his appearance was abruptly ended on Saturday, frustrated fans stormed the pitch and vandalised banners and tents, as others hurled plastic chairs and water bottles.

The 2022 World Cup winner - considered one of football's great-



est players of all time - had been expected to play a short exhibition game at the stadium, news agency reported.

As it became apparent Messi's appearance had ended, local media say the scene turned ugly

"Only leaders and actors were surrounding Messi ... Why did they call us then ... We have got a ticket for 12 thousand rupees, but we were not even able to see his face",

a fan at the stadium told Indian news agency ANI.

One angry fan told another Indian news agency that people had paid the equivalent of a month's salary to see the eight-time Ballon d'Or winner.

"I paid Rs 5,000 for the ticket and came with my son to watch Messi, not politicians.

"The police and military personnel were taking selfies, and the

The Argentine star is in India for his 'GOAT tour', a series of promotional events in Kolkata, Hyderabad, Mumbai and New Delhi

Announcing an enquiry, Banerjee apologised to Messi and "sports lovers" for the incident at the stadium.

"The [enquiry] committee will conduct a detailed enquiry into the incident, fix responsibility, and recommend measures to prevent such occurrences in the future," she said on X.

In the early hours of Saturday, thousands lined the roads and congregated outside the hotel where Messi was staying to try and catch a glimpse of him.

Hitesh, a 24-year-old corporate lawyer, flew nearly 1,900 kilometres from the south Indian city of Bengaluru.

"For me it's personal. You can see I am quite short, and I love to play football with my friends," Hitesh told the BBC, standing in front of the statue.

"Messi is the player I related with the most, no one can match his talent. He gives me hope that with talent you can do anything."

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

FORMER BRAZIL INTERNATIONAL

Berlin stun Leipzig to end losing run

BERLIN: Union Berlin halted a three-match losing run and dented RB Leipzig's title challenge with a composed 3-1 home victory founded on defensive discipline and clinical finishing at the Stadion An der Alten Forsterei on Friday.

Leipzig, starting the evening second in the Bundesliga, dominated possession early but found little room against a compact Union block. Frederik Rønnow kept the hosts level before the interval, first denying Yan Dione after a strong individual run and then reacting sharply to keep out Christoph Baumgartner's header from a corner.

Union offered limited attacking threat but remained organised, almost taking the lead when Janik Haberer headed narrowly wide in stoppage time.

The match turned shortly before the hour mark. After Union won



the ball high up the pitch, Jeong Woo-yeong slipped a precise pass into Oliver Burke, who curled a superb left-footed finish into the top corner to give the hosts the lead.

Leipzig responded within three

minutes as substitute Tidiam Gomis made an immediate impact, taking a touch inside the area before drilling a powerful shot past Rønnow to level the contest. Union, however, answered quickly. Another substitute, Christopher

Trimmel, delivered a pinpoint cross from the right, and Ilyas Ansah rose highest to head home from close range.

Leipzig pushed for another equaliser but struggled for ideas against Union's deep defensive block. The hosts remained dangerous on the counter and sealed the result in stoppage time as Tim Skarke finished calmly after a swift break involving Andras Schafer and Andrej Ilic.

"It was a good overall performance," said Union captain Christopher Trimmel. "Leipzig were better in the first half and had chances, but it feels very good to put in a game like this."

The win lifted Union to eighth place on 18 points from 14 matches, while Leipzig remained second on 29, eight behind leader Bayern Munich and one ahead of Borussia Dortmund. - *Xinhua*

Ex-Chelsea midfielder Oscar to quit football

RIO DE JANEIRO: Sao Paulo midfielder Oscar has decided to retire from professional football after being diagnosed with heart problems, according to Brazilian media reports.

The 34-year-old informed people close to him of his decision not to risk further complications following an incident that left him in intensive care last month, Globo Esporte said.

Oscar returned to Sao Paulo, his boyhood club, on a three-year deal last December after successful spells with Chelsea and Shanghai Port. Injuries, including a lumbar fracture in July, limited him to 21 matches this year, in which he scored two goals and provided five assists.

The former Brazil international



al is expected to meet Sao Paulo officials in the coming days to seek the termination of a contract that runs until 2027. Sao Paulo is understood to be considering offering him an off-field role. Oscar collapsed during a fitness test at the club's Barra Funda training centre on Nov. 11. - *Xinhua*

2026 WORLD CUP

Five million World Cup ticket requests received in one day, says FIFA

NEW YORK: Five million requests for 2026 World Cup tickets have been made since the latest ticketing phase opened on Thursday, said FIFA - despite growing criticism over their cost.

Football's world governing body says fans from more than 200 countries have asked for tickets, with the group match between Colombia and Portugal in Miami on 27 June the most sought after.

But the pricing structure for next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico has been criticised, with the Football Supporters' Association (FSA) calling it "scandalous".

Group-stage tickets are up to three times the prices of those for Qatar in 2022, while the cheapest ticket for the final will cost £3,119 (US\$4,171).

The Football Association will contact FIFA to relay fans' concerns after it was asked to lobby the world governing body to lower



the price of tickets.

The FSA has joined Football Supporters Europe (FSE) in demanding the sales process be stopped so fans' groups can hold talks with FIFA over its pricing policy.

"We back Football Supporters

Europe in calling for a halt in ticket sales and we are calling on the Football Association to work with fellow FAs to directly challenge these disgraceful prices," the FSA said in a statement.

"We call on all national associations to stand up for your support-



ers, without whom there would be no professional game."

FIFA has yet to comment on the criticism, while both the FA and the Scottish FA have yet to comment on the ticket prices.

There is a FIFA Council meeting in Doha next week.

FIFA president Gianni Infantino has also promised to achieve record revenues, and the most lucrative sports event in history will do no harm to his re-election hopes in 2027.

The huge increase in the price of tickets was revealed on Thursday when FIFA released allocation details for the official supporters' groups of each country.

At the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, group stage fixtures all had set prices of £68.50 (US\$ 91.60), £164.50 (US\$ 220) or £219 (US\$293).

But for England v Croatia and Scotland v Brazil next year, tickets cost around £198 (US\$265), £373 (US\$499) or £523 (US\$699).

The cost ramps up considerably in the latter stages. Quarter-finals for all teams are £507 (US\$678), £757 (US\$1,012) and £1,073 (US\$1,435), with the semi-finals £686 (US\$917), £1,819 (US\$2,433) and £2,363 (US\$3,160).

The cheapest tickets for the final are £3,119 (US\$4,171), seven times more expensive than in Qatar.

There are no concessions across any of its tickets for children or other groups.

Next year's World Cup, the first time 48 nations will be taking part, takes place from Thursday, 11 June to Sunday, 19 July, with the draw made last Friday.

While Colombia v Portugal has been the most popular match so far, FIFA said that is followed by Brazil v Morocco (New Jersey, 13 June), Mexico v South Korea (Guadalajara, 18 June), Ecuador v Germany (New Jersey, 25 June), and Scotland v Brazil (Miami, 24 June).

According to FIFA, the most requests for tickets have come from the three host nations, followed by Colombia, England, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina, Scotland, Germany, Australia, France and Panama. - *Agencies*

INEFFECTIVE CONTROLS

Dopers are beating system, says Athletics Integrity Unit chief

LONDON: Cheats are winning the battle against anti-doping authorities in elite sport, according to a top official.

David Howman, who chairs the Athletics Integrity Unit and served as director general of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) for 13 years, says the anti-doping system has “stalled”, allowing those who take banned substances to prosper.

“Let’s be honest and pragmatic – the system has stalled,” Howman said.

“Intentional dopers at elite level are evading detection. We are not effective enough nowadays in catching cheats.

“Our ineffectiveness in dealing with those who are beating the rules is hurting the anti-doping movement’s credibility.”



Former world 100m silver medallist Marvin Bracy-Williams was banned for more than three and half years last month after admitting doping offences, while fellow American Erriyon Knighton

was banned for four years in September after testing positive for steroids.

Women’s marathon world record holder Ruth Chepngetich was banned for three years in October



after her sample showed a banned diuretic commonly used as a masking agent.

The unity of the world anti-doping effort has been compromised in recent years.

WADA and the US anti-doping agency have clashed over the handling of a doping scandal involving 23 Chinese swimmers, funding and the staging of next year’s Enhanced Games, an event which

encourages the use of banned substances, in Las Vegas.

The anti-doping authorities in Kenya, whose athletes have been involved in a spate of positive tests, are on a WADA watchlist, while Russia, whose officials were found to be involved in the systematic cheating and swapping of samples at the 2014 Winter Olympics at Sochi, are still judged as “non-compliant” by WADA.

Howman suggested better sharing of information among anti-doping bodies and a “bounty-hunting” style incentivisation to encourage them to proactively chase cheats.

“We must all do better to support our clean athletes by catching the dirty ones, especially those at the pinnacle of sport,” he added. - Agencies

Chase: ‘We try to hold everyone accountable for their actions’

West Indies skipper called on his batters to convert their starts after they lost the second Test to New Zealand

WELLINGTON: After another collective batting failure, West Indies captain Roston Chase called on his batters to convert their starts and hold themselves accountable after undoing the work of a disciplined bowling attack.

West Indies made only 205 in the first innings in the second Test against New Zealand in Wellington, but then restricted New Zealand to 278. However, they were skittled for just 128 in the second innings when batting conditions were in fact better, and eventually went down by nine wickets.

Chase said the manner of the loss stung especially because West Indies had got into a decent position before the collapse, and rejected suggestions that conditions were to blame.

“We were in a good position up to this morning, even though in the

first innings, we thought that we should have got some more runs,” Chase said in the post-match press conference.

“A number of batsmen got some starts, but we didn’t really convert into anything big. We left some runs up there in the first innings, and we thought that we would have gotten those runs in the second innings, but it didn’t happen. So very disappointing for us after the bowlers really put up their hands and brought us back into the game.

“I still thought that the pitch was one that we could score runs on. Personally, I thought it was not as tough as the first game. I thought the first innings in [the first Test in] Christchurch, the ball was doing a whole lot, but I didn’t think that was the case here. I just thought we just made some mistakes at some crucial points in the game, and we just never really got our foot back into the game today.”

Across the tour, Chase said, West Indies’ batting malaise had been clear: players get in, and then give it away. In Wellington, seven times batters crossed 20 across both of West Indies’ innings, yet the highest score was Shai Hope’s 47. The rest, like Hope, frittered away promising starts - 44, 33 and 29 in the first innings, followed by 22, 35 and 25 in the second.

“You have to work very hard to get that start,” Chase said.

“It’s just about buckling down and having that determination to



carry it. You will get good balls, but I think sometimes we just give it away a little too easy when we get to the 30s and the 40s. But especially in New Zealand, we know the first innings is very crucial. If you can get a good first-innings total where the ball is moving around a lot more and [there’s] a lot of green on the wicket, that puts you in a commanding position to have a chance at winning the game.

“When we do sit and chat after games, we sit and we discuss those things. We try to hold everyone accountable for their actions. But not only just talking, we need to find ways out there in the middle to combat what is being thrown at us.”

Yet, even after a chastening defeat, Chase stressed that the squad remained driven by a long-standing ambition: winning a Test

in New Zealand for the first time in 30 years. A victory in the third Test in Mount Maunganui would not only end that drought but also square the series and give West Indies their first win of the 2025-27 World Test Championship cycle.

“The last time we won in New Zealand was in 1995, so we want to leave here with a win,” Chase said. “We still think that we are capable enough to get a win, but

it’s just for us to be consistent, because the bowlers have shown that they’re capable of getting us those ten wickets or 20 wickets that we need to get.”

Earlier, Jacob Duffy claimed five wickets as New Zealand sealed a straightforward victory over West Indies on day three of the second Test in Wellington.

A makeshift New Zealand bowling attack - missing several frontline seamers - skittled West Indies for 128 before reaching a modest victory target of 56 runs for the loss of one wicket.

Duffy - playing in just his third Test - finished with a five-wicket haul for the second time in the series.

“We took a little bit to get into the game, [on the] morning of day one [with] potentially some heavy legs,” New Zealand captain Tom Latham said.

“But we adjusted things and we bowled better in the second innings, and Duffy on the back of that [five-wicket haul] and some of our substitutes coming on and getting on the board [was pleasing].”

Victory ensures New Zealand, who drew the first Test, cannot lose the series with just next week’s Test in Tauranga remaining.

It is New Zealand’s first win of the 2025-27 World Test Championships (WTC) cycle, while West Indies have now lost six of their seven outings. - Agencies

ASHES SERIES

Khawaja ‘100%’ fit for Adelaide

ADELAIDE: Australia’s Usman Khawaja has declared himself 100% fit ahead of the third Test in Adelaide but conceded whether he earns a recall is out of his hands.

Khawaja missed the second Test in Brisbane after not recovering from the back spasms he suffered in Perth, saying that while he may have been able to push through had the game been later in the series it was too much of a risk early in the contest.

“Obviously I hope to play,” he told reporters in Adelaide, where Ashes resumes on December 17. “I don’t really know. Obviously, it’s not my decision. The older I’ve got, the more comfortable I’ve got with things that I can control and things that I haven’t. I feel really good in terms of I’m ready to go. The rest of it is not in my control. So, yeah, we’ll see what happens.

“I’m feeling 100%. So unless something else [happens], but I felt 100% before Perth, too. It’s just one of those things. I’ve done everything. That’s why I was training all last week. I was just doing rehab, which sucks because when you get injured, you have to do more, right.

“I’ve had a fair bit of load, but it’s obviously what I wanted to just get as much as possible and I’m running at 100% again and again. So everything’s feeling pretty good again.”

Khawaja, who turns 39 next week, went through multiple gym, running and net sessions before, during and since the Gabba Test. He added that he was being extra careful about how much he does on the day he flies into venues, conceding he had felt sore after a delayed six-hour flight to Perth, although insisted the much-talked



about rounds of golf had not been a factor. “I’ve always been a professional,” he said.

In Khawaja’s absence, Travis Head and Jake Weatherald have combined to produce two impressive stands: the chase in Perth where they added 75 and the first innings in Brisbane where their 77-run partnership put England on the back foot on the second day.

But Khawaja backed himself to have a game that could adjust to various tempos, citing his Sheffield Shield form where he had a strike-rate of 62.34 in three matches which puts him just outside the top 10 from those with 200 runs this season.

“I’ve got gears when I want them,” he said. “You’ve got to find a way to be consistent for a long period of time, not just over a game or two. So I’ve always been conscious of that. I can go out there and play more shots and I think I’ve been scoring pretty [quickly]. So sometimes the game and the situation dictates that [and] the wickets dictate that. I think I just play the game, what’s in front of me.

The option remains for Khawaja to return in the middle order where he batted on his Test comeback in 2022. “I’ve always done really well batting at four or five,” he said. “Normally people that open aren’t as attuned to No. 5 as opening because they’re not as good playing spin. But I’ve proven I’m one of the best players to spin in Australia. So, that’s never been the issue. So I can bat anywhere.”

Khawaja, who has one hundred in his last 45 Test innings and averages 31.84 since the 2023 Ashes, said talk around his position “doesn’t really faze me” although when pressed on whether any of the commentary about him has an effect, he admitted it was impossible to be completely unaware.

In terms of his future, Khawaja said that “I’m not here to hang around” but added the most important aspect to him was knowing he was still wanted in the team. “I could have retired two years ago,” he said. “I could have retired at any time. But I’m still valued by the team. I’m still asked to be here, to play. So I’m here.” - Agencies

LOCAL CRICKET

Crowe defeat EY to clinch Auditor’s Cup 2025



MUSCAT: Crowe defeated EY by seven wickets to clinch the Auditor’s Cup 2025 for the third time at the Oman Cricket Academy ground in Al Amerat recently.

The 23rd edition of the tournament, organised by Jazz Boys Sports, featured eight teams and teams competed with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement.

In the final, EY won the toss and chose to bat. Led by Issa Al Balushi’s 21 and Omar Sarfaraz’s 11, EY scored 59/5 in the stipulated six overs. Nashfathullah Nilar and Chandika Prashan took a wicket each.

Ivan Manjila’s 28 off 18 balls and Nilar’s breezy knock of 18 from nine balls powered Crowe to the target in 5.4 overs as they reached 61/3 to secure their third Auditor’s Cup title. Raza Rizvi was the most successful bowler with 2/13.

BAF Oman, competing for the first time, reached the Eliminator and finished as second runners-up.



Awards: Player of the Tournament: Omar Sarfraz (EY), Best Batter: Ivan Manjila (Crowe), Best Bowler: Pankaj Gupta (BAF), Best Wicketkeeper: Prakshit (BAF), Maximum Sixes: Omar Sarfraz (EY), Special Recognition: Farid Sheikh (Deloitte).

ROUND-UP

Malabar Gold & Diamonds unveils exciting Mine Diamond Festival

As part of the Mine Diamond Festival, customers will be eligible for a free instant cash voucher worth OMR 10 for every diamond or precious gem worth OMR 300

MUSCAT: Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the 5th largest jewellery retailer globally with over 415 showrooms across 14 countries, has unveiled exclusive offers as part of their much-awaited Mine Diamond Festival. As part of the festival, cus-

tomers can get free cash vouchers on the purchase of diamond or precious gem jewellery. The limited period offer can be availed across all Malabar Gold showrooms in Oman from 11 December to 3 January 2026. As part of the Mine Diamond Festival, customers will be eligible for a free instant cash voucher worth OMR 10 for every diamond or precious gem worth OMR 300. The mesmerizing collection of diamond jewellery from the Mine brand, crafted exclusively with natural diamonds that are internationally certified & responsibly sourced, is some of the most sought-after array of jewellery from Malabar Gold & Diamonds. The brand is also offering 100% Value on Diamond exchange across all its showrooms, making diamond jewellery attractive not only as an adornment but as an investment as well. "Diamond jewellery has seen a remarkable rise in popularity over the years, a trend we've observed across all the regions we operate in. At Malabar Gold & Diamonds,

we've consistently stayed ahead of the curve, offering a diverse and stunning collection of diamond jewelry that caters to our customers' ever-evolving preferences. With the Mine Diamond Festival, we're giving them even more reasons to invest in the timeless beauty of diamonds through our exclusive offers, making it the perfect occasion to buy ones dream diamonds" commented Shamlal Ahamed, MD – International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds. Malabar Gold & Diamonds is renowned globally for offering an unparalleled jewellery buying experience with convenience, and customer-friendly policies along with the 'Malabar Promise' of incomparable quality and service assurance. The Malabar Promise also includes 100% value on diamond & gold exchange, assured lifetime maintenance from any of the showrooms across 14 countries, guaranteed buyback, tested and certified diamonds, hallmarked jewellery, responsible sourcing, fair price policy, and more.



RECOGNITION

Mustafa Ahmed Salman conferred with Lifetime Achievement Award

MUSCAT: The Business Leadership Awards 2025, organized by Times of Oman, shone a well-deserved spotlight on one of the Sultanate's most respected figures in finance and business, Mustafa Ahmed Salman, who was conferred with the Lifetime Achievement Award – an honour reserved for individuals whose work has left a lasting imprint on the nation's economic and institutional development. With over four and a half decades of distinguished service in the financial sector, Salman's professional journey mirrors the evolution of Oman's capital markets. From his early years in financial-related government roles to his long-standing leadership across Omani, GCC, and international capital markets, he has consistently played a pivotal role in building trust, transparency, and resilience within the financial ecosystem. A visionary who has been closely associated with the Muscat Stock Exchange since its inception, Salman has contributed meaningfully to the growth and



modernization of Oman's capital market institutions. His influence extends beyond the trading floor – through board leadership, policy advocacy, and his active involvement in national and international business councils, strengthening Oman's position as a credible and forward-looking investment destination. Beyond his professional achievements, Salman is widely respected for his integrity, commitment, and belief in people-centric leadership. His engagement in industry forums, media platforms, and professional circles reflects a career anchored not only in success, but in service.

OMAN ARAB BANK

OAB launches Boulevard Al Samou project with strategic partners

MUSCAT: In a step that reflects an ambitious development vision and a genuine spirit of partnership between the public and private sectors, Oman Arab Bank celebrated the launch of "Boulevard Al Samou" in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning and Al Daham Real Estate, and signed the project's financing agreement in the presence of ministers, excellencies, and distinguished guests. This development represents far more than an urban project – it is a pioneering model that enhances quality of life and drives sustainable economic and social growth across Oman's governorates. This partnership reaffirms Oman Arab Bank's long-standing commitment to supporting high-impact national initiatives, and its belief that balanced, forward-looking urban development is a vital pillar of Oman Vision 2040. Boulevard Al Samou aims to provide modern and vibrant residential environments, create new opportunities for SMEs, stimulate local economic activity, and support the development of dynamic community-centered spaces. With its distinctive design and integrated vision, Boulevard Al Samou stands as a landmark project that embodies sustainable



urban progress – connecting temporary living with promising investment and economic opportunities. The project opens new doors for cross-sector partnerships, enhances the attractiveness of the governorates for investment, and contributes to a more balanced and integrated urban ecosystem. Sulaiman Al Harthi, CEO of Oman Arab Bank, expressed his pride in this strategic collaboration, stating: "Boulevard Al Samou reflects our commitment to enabling meaningful development across Oman. Supporting projects that create long-term value, stimulate local economies, and elevate

the quality of life is at the core of our mission as a national financial institution. We are proud to contribute to a project that aligns so closely with the aspirations of Oman Vision 2040." From the real estate development perspective, Eng. Mundher Al Hamadi, CEO of Al Daham Real Estate, emphasized the project's transformative potential, noting: "Boulevard Al Samou is designed to redefine urban living by integrating modern lifestyle needs with sustainable development principles. Our vision is to build a destination that enriches communities, encourages investment, and contributes meaningfully to

the country's urban renaissance. We value the trust and partnership with Oman Arab Bank in making this project a reality." At Oman Arab Bank, the success of such initiatives reflects the strength of collaboration and the shared vision of partners committed to shaping a more prosperous future. Boulevard Al Samou represents a significant step forward in a national journey toward impactful, future-ready urban development. Today's partnership lays the foundation for tomorrow's progress and Boulevard Al Samou marks a confident step toward a vibrant, sustainable urban future for Oman.

COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

'Doing Business in Oman' guide unveiled to support investors

MUSCAT: Crowe Oman's, 'Doing Business in Oman' guide, designed in collaboration with Invest Oman was launched by Qais Bin Mohammed Al Yousef last Monday, at a grand ceremony held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Qurum last Monday. 'Doing Business in Oman' is a comprehensive guide, to support investors and enterprises seeking opportunities within the Sultanate's rapidly expanding market now in its 12th revised edition. One of the leading accounting and consulting firms in the Sultanate, Crowe Oman marked a major milestone as it celebrated its 30th Anniversary of building lasting relationship with clients, regulators, communities and with Oman itself. The event brought together an eminent gathering of Dignitaries, Ambassadors, Business Leaders, Clients, Partners, and alongside the firm's own team, to honour three decades of trust, innovation and sustained progress. Earlier welcoming the dignitaries and guests, Dr. Davis Kallukaran expressed deep pride in the firm's remarkable journey, thanking the Government and people of Oman for their trust and support over three decades. He extended his appreciation to clients, partners and employees for their commitment, and reaffirmed Crowe Oman's pledge to pursue excellence, innovation and impactful contributions in the years ahead. The celebration was highlighted



by the distinguished presence of Qais Al Yousef as the Chief Guest, and His Highness Sayyid Hamoud bin Kais Bin Tarek Al Said, as the Guest of Honour. The ceremony also featured a heartfelt tribute to the firm's roots through a 'Founders Recognition Ceremony, honouring the visionaries who laid the foundation of the firm. Long Service Awards' were also bestowed on several team members who have served more than 20 to 10 years, reflecting the culture of loyalty and continuity that defines Crowe Oman. Zayd Maniar, Managing Partner, Crowe UAE, and Muna Al Ghazali, Founding Partner of Crowe Mak Ghazali, also shared their reflections on the milestone. Both expressed gratitude for the enduring partnerships that have shaped the firm's regional success and emphasized their commitment to enhancing

collaboration and amplifying value for clients across the GCC. Antony Kallukaran, Partner tax advisory proposed the vote of thanks. Established in 1995, Crowe Oman began its journey under the wise leadership of Dr. Davis Kallukaran, Muna Al Ghazaali, and Dr. Khalid Maniar. From its modest beginnings, the firm has evolved into a powerhouse with 10 Partners and over 100 professionals, offering deep expertise across Audit & Assurance, Taxation, Risk Advisory, Corporate Finance, Technology & Forensic Audits, Telecom, Sustainability, ESG, Hospitality, Travel and Leisure. Crowe Global's 2026 Europe, Middleast & Africa meet (EMEA) in Muscat "Crowe Global has selected Muscat for its upcoming Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) re-

gional conference scheduled to take place from 2026 May 6-8. This is the first time that the two-day regional conference will be held in Oman, said Dr Davis Kallukaran, Managing Partner, Crowe Oman. He was delivering the keynote address at the 30th Anniversary celebrations of Crowe Oman, held last Monday. "Crowe Global's regional conference is a significant event for Oman, with more than 150 partners and member firm leaders who represent over 100 countries attending the conference. The decision of the board to hold the Conference in Muscat demonstrates the significance of Oman on the Global radar" The event enables Crowe member firms in EMEA to collectively leverage global and local growth opportunities identified within Crowe's strategic priori-

ties and listed in Oman's Vision 2040 Strategy. Kamel Abouchacra, CEO of Crowe Global, noted, "We are grateful to our firm in Oman for hosting us and for their contributions to the network. It is an excellent location for our member firms to accelerate growth plans and continue pursuing the collaborative approach they use to deliver consistent service excellence to clients all around the world." Abouchacra added, "Crowe Mak Ghazali celebrating their 30th anniversary, is a testament to their depth of talent, expertise, and sector knowledge. They reflect Crowe's values and brand behaviors, putting quality, innovation, and clients first in everything they do. We look forward to recognizing this milestone during our upcoming event in Muscat." As the host firm for the regional

conference, Crowe Mak Ghazali has an active presence in Oman. Apart from Audit, Tax, Business, and Risk Advisory services, the firm is well positioned in the technology and telecom sectors. The Oman firm is also among 52 Crowe firms and the only firm in the Middleast that is licensed Horwath HTL to provide hotel, travel, and leisure consulting. Filipa Correia, EMEA Regional Executive, stated, "Muscat is an ideal location to bring together many of Crowe's thought leaders. In-person events such as these facilitate new working relationships and strengthen existing ones. They also invite productive discussions around innovation and technology, service delivery, and talent development." Oman's story is one of resilience, openness, and long-term vision. From its strategic location bridging the Gulf, the Indian Ocean, Asia, and Africa, Oman has nurtured trade routes, enabled connectivity, and welcomed investment – creating an environment where businesses can grow with confidence. Under Oman Vision 2040, the country has set clear priorities: a competitive, diversified economy driven by the private sector; sustainable cities and governorates; human capital development; and responsible state institutions – a roadmap that balances growth with inclusion and environmental stewardship.

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