



HM RECEIVES THANKS FROM EMIR OF KUWAIT

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has received a cable of thanks from Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait in reply to His Majesty's condolences cable on the death of Sheikha Suhaira Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah. In the cable, Sheikh Mishal expressed his utmost thanks for His Majesty's sincere condolences and sympathy, praying to Allah the Almighty to rest the deceased's soul in peace and protect His Majesty against all harms. — **ONA**



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FINANCING PROGRAMME TO HELP SMES IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS LAUNCHED

The programme targets existing SMEs located within the geographical area affected by an emergency



MUSCAT: The Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (ASMED) announced on Sunday the launch of an emergency financing programme to lend support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) during emergency situations. The programme seeks to ensure that SMEs would continue to

function in a sustainable manner and to consolidate their ability to deal with emergency conditions. The authority explained that the financing programme targets existing SMEs located within the geographical area affected by an

emergency as declared by the authorities concerned. It added that the programme provides rapid and effective financial support to the affected SMEs, to help diminish the economic impacts resulting from emergency situations.

Terms set for SMEs to avail the emergency support include the following: (1) The owner of the SME should have an entrepreneurship card (Riyada Card); (2) The owner's financial and credit status allows him/her to obtain

such financing; (3) The grace period (non-payment period) for the programme's beneficiaries lasts for a maximum of two years; (4) The loan repayment period should not exceed 5 years, starting from the end of the grace period. ASMED pointed out that the launch of this programme was prompted by close follow-up of the conditions of SMEs during the recent tropical depression.

The SMEs sector in Oman is witnessing progress at a rapid pace.

The number of SMEs registered at ASMED increased by 30 percent by the end of 2023 to reach 135,064, compared to 104,141 in 2022.

The number of enterprises holding an entrepreneurship card (Riyada) reached 29,000 by the end of 2023, representing 22% of the total SMEs registered at ASMED. The number of SMEs at various business incubators stands at 103. — **ONA**

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

Oman condemns attacks on Yemen

1 Oman has denounced the Israeli military attacks on Yemen. These attacks represent a new escalation of regional tension that would further complicate the regional situation. **>A2**

OMAN

Royal Cavalry wins

2 Oman's Royal Cavalry team won second place at the British Open Polo Championship. **>A2**

WORLD

Court cuts job quotas

3 Bangladeshi authorities extended a curfew before the country's court ruled to cut job quotas. **>A6**

WIDESPREAD PROTESTS

Bangladeshi expats in Oman anxious over violent protests back home

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Bangladeshi expatriates in Oman are increasingly anxious about the deteriorating situation in their home country, where widespread protests have led to over 100 deaths. The unrest has caused severe disruptions in communication, with the internet down and telephone services unreliable, making it difficult for expats in Oman to stay informed about the welfare of their loved ones back home.

The protests in Bangladesh, which began as a student-led movement demanding the government scrap its preferential hiring rules for civil service jobs, have escalated into the most severe unrest the country has seen in years.

Bangladesh Social Club chief appeals for peace

In the midst of this turmoil, Sirajul Haque, Chairman of the Bangladesh Social Club Oman, has urged Bangladeshi expatriates in Oman not to hold any demonstrations or gatherings without official permission.

"It is strictly prohibited to hold any demonstration or gathering anywhere in Oman, even if it is peaceful, without a permit from the competent authority," Haque told the *Times of Oman* on Sunday.

The Bangladesh Social Club has taken proactive steps to ensure that all Bangladeshi expats



are aware of Omani laws regarding public gatherings and Haque appealed for calm and peace in the current situation.

"We have officially informed everyone living here," Haque emphasised. Special meetings were held at the club premises to brief members about the regulations and the importance of adhering to them.

Protests in the UAE, many Bangladeshis detained

This warning comes in the wake of the detention of several Bangladeshi expatriates in the UAE for participating in protests against their home government.

The UAE's public prosecutor's office stated that the individuals were arrested for "committing crimes of gathering in a public place and protesting against their home government with the intent to incite unrest." The exact number of detainees

was not disclosed.

Back in Oman, the Bangladeshi community is deeply concerned about the escalating violence and the safety of their families. "Communication lines are disrupted, and the Internet has been shut down nationwide. However, we are staying in touch with our loved ones via phone," Haque said, highlighting the challenges faced by the expatriates.

The unofficial death toll from the protests in Bangladesh crossed 110 on Sunday afternoon, adding to the expats' distress.

"With the Internet down, many Bangladeshi newspapers are unable to update on the situation," Haque added.

The Bangladeshi community in Oman is closely monitoring the situation, hoping for a peaceful resolution. In the meantime, they are urged to remain calm and abide by local laws to avoid any legal repercussions.

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Isha.....	8:19pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:09am

Oman condemns Israeli airstrikes on Yemen

Oman called on the international community to assume its responsibilities to maintain regional and international peace and security and take decisive action to protect civilians



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman has denounced the Israeli military attacks on the Republic of Yemen. These attacks represent a new escalation of regional tension that would further complicate the regional situation, hamper efforts to calm and end conflicts, and hinder

the achievement of the desired peace, especially with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the achievement of justice for the Palestinian people. In a statement issued by the Foreign Ministry yesterday, the Sultanate of Oman called on the international community to assume its responsibilities to maintain regional and international

peace and security and take decisive action to protect civilians and ensure the access of urgent humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip. Oman also underscored the importance of addressing the roots and real causes of the conflict and prioritising dialogue and negotiation as a means of achieving sus-

tainable solutions, on the basis of the international law, which must be applied on all parties without discrimination or double standards. Firefighting teams were battling a blaze at the Hodeidah port on Sunday, with thick plumes of black smoke shrouding the sky above the city. -ONA

CPA shuts down establishment for contract violations

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A commercial establishment in Muscat Governorate has been closed for its failure to honour its contractual obligations and provide service by due dates. The Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) recently took action against a commercial establishment operating in the carpentry, blacksmithing, and aluminum sector in Muscat Governorate. The establishment was closed by the Complaints Department at CPA's headquarters due to its failure to follow transparency, credibility, and consumer rights rules when providing services. Specifically, the establishment did not honour its contractual obligations and failed to provide the service within the agreed-upon period. The case originated when the Complaints Department received multiple complaints from consumers who had contracted with the workshop to manufacture and install aluminum doors and windows for their homes. The workshop did not fulfill its commitment to provide the services within the agreed time frame and continuously delayed

the completion of the work. This behaviour contradicts Article 23 of the Consumer Protection Law, which states that service providers are obligated to deliver services to consumers in a proper manner, within a reasonable time frame that matches the nature of the service. In case of a breach, the provider is required to refund the value of the service or provide compensation based on the impact of the deficiency, or to perform the service properly as determined by regulations. Following coordination with the Public Prosecution, the Complaints Department took legal measures, resulting in a judicial decision to temporarily close the establishment until the lawsuit is resolved and other necessary legal procedures are carried out. The Consumer Protection Authority emphasised the importance of commercial establishments adhering to transparency and credibility in their dealings with consumers. By doing so, establishments can protect consumer rights, avoid legal violations, and prevent the consequences that may arise from such violations.

TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The Internal Tender Committee at the Ministry of Labour announces the following tender:

Tender No.	Tender title	Last date for tender purchase online	Bid submission date
29/2024	Renewing licenses for the systems protecting and organizing the e-mail of Ministry employees	Sunday 28/07/2024 2:00 p.m.	Monday 05/08/2024 10 a.m.

- Specialized establishments may obtain the tender's documents online through the following link, starting from Monday 22/07/2024 at 08:00 a.m.: [/https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om](https://etendering.tenderboard.gov.om)
- Bids shall be submitted online.
- Bids shall be opened at 11:00 am on Monday 05/08/2024.

(The Ministry shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any other bid)

labour_OMAN

Royal Cavalry wins second place at British polo event



LONDON: Oman's Royal Cavalry team won second place at the British Open Polo Championship, held at the stadium of the Aspect Knepp Castle Polo Club. The champion saw four teams, including Royal Cavalry, vying for the precious trophy. The three other competitors

were the teams of the English Aspect Polo Club, the Irish Polo Club and the Czech Republic Polo Club. The final match brought together the teams of the Royal Cavalry and the Irish Club. The latter club scored five goals, against three for the Royal Cavalry. Yet, Royal Cavalry player

Mazin Mohammed Al Zadjali won the Best Player's Award in the championship. The final match was attended by Badr Mohammed Al Manthri, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. -ONA

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MEETING

Commander of RNO receives Turkish naval official

MUSCAT: Rear Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) received in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison on Sunday Maj.Gen Eren Gunay, Commander of Istanbul Strait, currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman. The two sides exchanged cordial talks and exchanged views on some naval matters of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by the Military attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye in Muscat. -ONA

Rear Admiral Saif Nasser Al Rahbi, Commander of the Royal Navy of Oman (RNO) meets with Maj.Gen Eren Gunay, Commander of Istanbul Strait, in his office at Al Murtafa'a Garrison on Sunday. He is currently visiting the Sultanate of Oman. -ONA



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COMMENTARY

The unsung heroes in our streets



SALEH AL-SHAIBANI

Everyone in the streets has a story to tell but in a different way and normally we are too busy to notice each other as we rush through to do our own businesses. But again not all of us have the same reasons to be in the streets. Some rush to make it for appointments or to their offices but those who have a purpose to be there are different from the rest of us. For example, what can you say to street sellers on the roadsides

who have been in the sun for ten hours? While slowing down around a corner, I noticed a small queue of people with plastic bottles. They were all queuing up to fill up their bottles from a dispenser of cold water attached on the compound of a house. It was a private house and the owner obviously knows, in the scorching heat of the summer, people who work in the streets, will always need water to drink. It was his way of appreciating the street people. Do we always notice street sweepers? They keep our roads and pavements clean and they are out there every single day. They do not make headlines in the newspapers or receive top awards. They go unnoticed working all their lives but doing noble duties. Now cast your mind to a person who is an air conditioned office, sitting in a comfortable chair, surrounded by many assistants but get-

ting paid thousands of rials a month. He is off the street and making loads of money for his company. I have every respect for the top executives like him because their work contribute to job creations and the economy of the country. They deserve the top money they get. But individuals like them live and work in different perimeters of life with those in the streets. You don't normally hear that people who contribute their time to the safety or well beings of others in the streets get any recognition. They work in the background. Their good deeds are hidden behind the veils of dusts in the streets blown from our passing cars as we rush with our businesses. Last week, I saw a man piling up plastic bags, containers, bottles and card boxes in his pickup vehicle from the beach. He was obviously going to sell them to a recycling company.

But he was actually cleaning up the beach but nobody really noticed him. Now compare him and the boss in the top floor of a multi-million rial company. Again, there is no parallel and I leave the answer to you. What about a man who regularly places plastic plates full of water next to rubbish bins for cats and birds to drink? No one in the whole street actually knows who he is and nobody bothers to ask or even stop to say 'salaam' to him. Like many like him, they are just a nameless shadow in the sunlight of the day. They all have one attribute in common. They do not seek rewards or 'bonuses' for their acts. They just do it and keep doing it. Let me rephrase it. Although they do not really seek rewards, they really get it in a non-monetary way. They feel peaceful after their daily actions and sleep easy every night.

RE-ELECTION

HM sends greetings to president of EU

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of congratulations to President Ursula von der Leyen on the occasion of her re-election as President of the European Commission. In the cable, His Majesty expressed his best wishes of success to the President of the European Commission. He also wished the peoples of the European Union, further progress. -ONA



CABLE

HM sends condolences to president of Vietnam

MUSCAT: His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of condolences to President Dr. Tu Lam of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the death of former president Nguyen Phu

Trong. In the cable, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his sincere condolences and heartfelt sympathy to President Dr. Tu Lam, family of the deceased and the people of Vietnam. -ONA

Rummana event attracts 15,000 in Jabal Al Akhdar

The volume of sales during is estimated at more than 500 kilograms of fruits and other products from various outlets



bal Al Akhdar and aims to spread the culture of environmentally-friendly agricultural tourism, and provide new unique experiences to tourists, in addition to its contribution to enhancing the local added value. He added that the Rummana project is the first of its kind to provide an exceptional experience for visitors through a number of activities and events through which they can enjoy a unique experience among the pomegranate trees, as the project was derived from the pomegranate fruit, for which Jabal Al Akhdar is famous. He explained that the Rummana event contributes to enhancing the status of Jabal Al Akhdar as a leading tourist, cultural and agricultural destination in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate. The Wilayat also abounds with a variety of natural resources that

are unique from other wilayats, the employment of which will contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of the agricultural and tourism sector in the Sultanate of Oman in general and Jabal Al Akhdar Wilayat in particular. This edition will play a role in enhancing the agricultural tourism experience for visitors to Jabal Al Akhdar in addition to supporting farmers to market their products. He explained that the project includes a number of events and activities in addition to a variety of restaurants and cafes. The project also organises many workshops and cultural events directed at children and families to instill the concept of tourism agriculture in them. The event also includes many children's games and specialised corners to sell the products of productive families.

Times News Service

JABAL AL AKHDAR: The number of visitors to the second edition of the Rummana event in the Wilayat of Jabal Al Akhdar in the Governorate of Al Dakhiliyah since its opening on July 4 has exceeded 15,000 visitors. The volume of sales during this period is estimated at more than 500 kilograms of fruits and other products from outlets that include 10 small and medium enterprises. Khalid bin Hamad Al-Aghbari, Head of the Field Work Team at the Agricultural Tourism Development Company (Janaen), said that the second edition of the Rummana event is part of the agricultural tourism initiatives and projects in the Wilayat of Al Ja-



RIYADA ENTREPRENEURSHIP

9,912 SMEs in North Al Sharqiyah

IBRA: The number of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate grew to 9,912 enterprises, among them 1,783 enterprises are holders of "Riyada" entrepreneurship card. Most of the SMEs in this governorate operate in the fields of tourism, agriculture, mining and technology. Salim Ali Al Hajri, Director of the SMEs Development Department in North Al Sharqiyah Governorate, affirmed the number of SMEs in the governorate saw steady growth over the past three years. As many as 995 artisans in the governorate benefited from public support, which included the sup-



ply of equipment and raw materials or the restoration of business sites during the year 2023-2024, said Al Hajri. He pointed out that young entre-

preneurs in the governorate have a passion for entrepreneurship, notably in promising aspects of their parts of the governorate. -ONA



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AL BALEED BEACH PROJECT IS AN ATTRACTIVE TOURIST DESTINATION FOR VISITORS IN SALALAH



Times News Service

MUSCAT: Al Baleed Beach Project is one of the new projects in the Wilayat of Salalah. It was established by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism in Al Baleed Archaeological Park as an outlet for families, including citizens, residents, and visitors of the Dhofar Governorate, especially in the Khareef season, which witnesses a great tourist momentum from inside and outside the Sultanate of Oman.

The project, which is considered a positive addition to the tourism sector in the governorate, includes a 1,200-meter walkway on a suspension bridge and 8 cafes and restaurants overlooking the sea.

Regarding the project, Ali bin Salem Al Kathiri, Director of the Frankincense Land Sites at the General Directorate of Heritage and Tourism in Dhofar Governorate, said in a statement : “In light of the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism’s keenness to benefit from the heritage components and its effort to empower the local community to ensure its benefit and to create a permanent partnership with it, an investment agreement was signed with the Royal International Company to revitalize cultural heritage sites as part of its goals aimed at creating a sustainable tourism sector.”

Al Kathiri pointed out that this agreement will result in attracting

more visitors to this important site included in the World Heritage List (Land of Frankincense Sites), which highlights the nobility of Omani heritage and its authentic culture. This project is considered one of the strategic projects that promote the tourism sector in the governorate in general and the location in particular.

Haiham bin Salem Al Hadary, owner of the investing company, said that the Al Baleed Beach project is of great importance to the development of the region, as it enhances economic and social life, and provides an attractive environment for citizens, residents, and visitors to the governorate to enjoy shopping, dining, and visiting all components of the project along this bridge.

Al Hadary pointed out that the Al Baleed Beach project is a unique architectural masterpiece, as the project is distinguished by the presence of shops and restaurants suspended on a bridge overlooking the sea and provides an exceptional experience for visitors.

Al Hadary added that the initial visitor numbers for the Al Baleed Beach project confirm that it will contribute significantly to attracting tourists, which will benefit the community and enhance the region’s position as a distinctive tourist destination. The coming period, the project will be developed by making additions that will attract different ages to benefit from the project in a positive way.



Many development projects under execution in Dhofar Governorate

The construction works of road projects are being built as per the state-of-the-art international technical standards

Times News Service

SALALAH: The construction works of the road projects by the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology in Dhofar Governorate with the state-of-the-art international technical standards has reached advanced stages. The projects are being executed within the Ministry's efforts related to the planning, design and construction of roads aimed to keep abreast of the economic

development in the Sultanate. Dhofar Governorate is witnessing the construction of a number of vital projects (currently under construction and others under the stages of design and award), in the various wilayats. Khamis bin Mohammed Al Shamakhi, Undersecretary for Transport at the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, said that the projects under construction include the design and change of the course of Arjout – Sarfait Road in the Wilayat of Dhalkut at the cost of OMR11 million. The completion percentage of this project amounted to 79% and is expected to be complete by the end of 2024, he added. He said that the completion percentage in the works of the Harweeb – Al Mazyouna-Mitan Road reached 15.2 % as scheduled and the cost of the project amounts to OMR30 million. The completion percentage of the works of the road network in the wilayat of Maqshan exceeded 15% and the cost of project is approximately OMR 13 million.



CLIMATE FINANCE ACTION FUND

Azerbaijan launches Climate Finance Action Fund in package of initiatives for COP29

Times News Service

BAKU: Azerbaijan has announced the Climate Finance Action Fund (CFAF) to invest in climate action in the developing world. CFAF will become operational at the conclusion of the initial fundraising round, which seeks to capitalise the fund with \$1 billion, and when 10 contributing countries committed as shareholders. CFAF will be capitalised with contributions from fossil fuel producing countries and companies across oil, gas and coal, and Azerbaijan will be a founding contributor. Members will commit to transfer annual contributions as a fixed-sum or based on volume of production. CFAF is one initiative within a package of 14 announced on Friday in Azerbaijan as part of the COP29 action agenda to enhance ambition and enable action. CFAF will be a catalytic public-private partnership fund, mobilising the private sector and de-risking investment. The fund will also contain special facilities with concessional and grant-based support to rapidly address the consequences of natural disasters in the developing countries in need. CFAF will provide off-take agreement guarantees for small and medium-sized renewable energy producers and first-loss capital for green industrial projects. The fund will also have a focus on the food and agriculture sector as a priority to protect livelihoods and



achieve net zero. Profits generated from projects will be reinvested in the fund. CFAF will become operational at the conclusion of the initial fundraising round, which seeks to capitalise the fund with \$1 billion, and when 10 contributing countries committed as shareholders. Fifty percent of the capital will be directed towards climate projects in developing countries that rely on support, across mitigation, adaptation, and research and development. These will promote the adoption of clean energy technologies, improve energy efficiency, strengthen climate resilience of

vulnerable populations, and facilitate the development of cutting-edge technologies. Fifty percent of the contributions will be allocated to helping meeting members' the next generation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to keep the 1.5C temperature target within reach. Azerbaijan has committed to leading by example, it is working to submit a 1.5-aligned NDC, and the COP29 Presidency is encouraging all Parties to come forward with similar plans. Twenty percent of the revenues generated from investments will be deposited in a Rapid Response

Funding Facility (2R2F) providing highly concessional and grant-based support. This facility will offer immediately accessible funding to address the consequences of natural disasters in Small Island Developing States, Least Developed Countries, and to other vulnerable developing communities as needed. The fund will be headquartered with its secretariat in Baku, Azerbaijan, its board of directors will include representatives from contributors, and an independent audit committee will publish quarterly data including financial reports and project evaluations.

Shareholders will collectively make decisions and a working group is being established with international financial experts to further develop the management model and funding mechanism. "Enabling action is an essential part of the COP29 agenda and we are committed to leading by example. I am grateful for the direction and support that I have received from the President of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, that countries rich in natural resources should be at the forefront of those addressing climate change," said COP29 President-Designate Mukhtar Babayev. "We have heard that communities want action not words, and today by launching the Climate Finance Action Fund we are taking a significant step. We are calling on donors to join us so that we can fulfil the COP29 plan to enhance ambition and enable action." "This process of intergovernmental cooperation, and each year's COP, is of vast significance. It is humanity's best hope to avert the global climate crisis, and spread the huge benefits of decarbonization and climate resilience," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Simon Stiell. "A successful COP in Baku is more important than ever. But this process is not easy and there is much to do. I am grateful for the hard work of the incoming COP President, his team, and the initiatives they are spearheading to create the grounds for success."

COP29 Chief Negotiator Yalchin Rafiyev said, "We have assessed the shortcomings in financial markets and carefully listened to the concerns of communities. This will be the first fund with both fossil fuel producing countries and companies across oil, gas and coal. It will be the first to both provide investment and to address the consequences of natural disasters. And it will be the first to receive annual transfers from its contributors. We also have given special attention to accessibility and speed when addressing the consequences of natural disasters and to ensuring that shareholders collectively make decisions." CFAF was launched within a package of 14 initiatives under the framework of the COP29 thematic days (see notes to editors below). Introducing the initiatives, Babayev said, "every action matters, because every fraction of a degree matters." The initiatives are designed to drive action across all climate pillars, involve global, regional, national and subnational groups, take a holistic view of sustainable development, and include all demographics within an inclusive process that delivers inclusive outcomes. Babayev announced that the COP29 Presidency would send a formal communication to Parties and Constituencies to the UNFCCC containing further information on the COP29 action agenda and its initiatives in due course.

Bangladesh top court cuts back job quotas after unrest

The Supreme Court has scaled back civil service job quotas that sparked deadly protests. But authorities are bracing for further unrest

DHAKA: Bangladeshi authorities extended a curfew on Sunday before the country's Supreme Court ruled to reduce government job quotas that this week sparked nationwide student-led protests.

The quotas originally reserved 30% of positions in the civil service for the families of people who fought for independence from Pakistan in the so-called Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971.

Local media reported that a curfew imposed late on Friday was to run until 3 p.m. local time (0900 GMT/UTC), after the hearing, then continue until further notice after a two-hour break for people to take in supplies.



Internet and text message services in Bangladesh have been suspended since Thursday amid the protests, and universities and colleges have been closed since Wednesday.

What did the court say?

"The Supreme Court has said the High Court verdict was illegal," Attorney-general A.M. Amin Uddin told AFP news agency, referring to a ruling last month that reintroduced the quotas.

He said that just 5% of civil service jobs would remain reserved for children of independence war veterans and 2% for other categories.

The quota rules were scrapped

by government in 2018 and their reintroduction caused widespread anger, particularly among the country's young people, who make up around a fifth of the population.

The Supreme Court brought forward the hearing, which was originally scheduled for August 7, to Sunday.

Some observers say that public anger will continue at the government even though the top court has decided to reduce the quotas.

The demonstrations in the past week, led largely by university students, were the largest since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was reelected for a fourth successive term this year in a vote without any real opposition.

At least 105 people died in the unrest.

Critics say the quotas benefit families loyal to Hasina, 76, who has ruled the country since 2009.

Rights groups accuse Hasina's government of misusing state institutions to consolidate its hold on power and suppress all dissent, including by the extrajudicial killing of opposition activists.

Anger at the quotas is especially rife among young graduates, who are facing an acute jobs crisis.

Soldiers are currently patrolling cities across Bangladesh, particularly the capital, Dhaka, following the protests, which saw deadly clashes between security forces and demonstrators.

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FIRE INCIDENT

Indian embassy in Kuwait condoles death of four members of a family

KUWAIT CITY: The Indian embassy in Kuwait has expressed condolences on the demise of family of four people, who were charred to death in a fire accident in Kuwait.

The Indian family of four, who lost their lives, included two children as well.

"Embassy @indembkwt expresses its deepest condolences on the tragic demise of Mr Mathews Mulackal, his wife and 2 children due to fire in his flat in Abassiya yesterday night," the Indian embassy wrote in a post on X.

Mortal remains

It stated that the officials will ensure the early repatriation of the

family's mortal remains.

"Embassy is in touch with his family and will ensure early repatriation of mortal remains," the embassy said.

Labour accommodation

Earlier in June, at least 45 Indians were killed in the fire incident at a labour accommodation in Kuwait's Mangaf.

Among the deceased from the fire incident that took place on June 12, seven were from Tamil Nadu, three from Andhra Pradesh and one each from Bihar, Odisha, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Haryana, Punjab, and West Bengal, in addition to 23 people from Kerala.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM 'X'



Musk greets Indian PM on being most followed leader

TEXAS: Tesla CEO Elon Musk has congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on being the most followed world leader on social media platform 'X'.

Taking to X, Musk stated, "Congratulations PM @NarendraModi on being the most followed world leader!"

Musk's statement came after PM Modi became the world's most followed leader in office, on the social media platform 'X' with over 100 million followers.

PM Modi is far ahead of other world leaders, including US President Joe Biden, who currently has 38.1 million followers, Dubai Ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum (11.2 million) and Pope Francis (18.5 million).

He is also ahead of global celebrities like Taylor Swift (95.2 million), Lady Gaga (83.1 million), and Kim Kardashian (75.2

million).

PM Modi even has more followers when compared to some active global athletes, including Virat Kohli (64.2 million), Brazilian footballer Neymar Jr (63.6 million) and American basketball player LeBron James (52.9 million).

While comparing the followers of various Indian politicians on X, PM Modi stands out significantly in terms of numbers.

The Leader of Opposition (LoP), Rahul Gandhi has 26.4 million followers, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has 27.5 million, Samajwadi Party's Akhilesh Yadav (19.9 million), West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee (7.4 million), Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad Yadav (6.3 million), his son Tejashwi Yadav (5.2 million) and NCP Chief Sharad Pawar 2.9 million followers.

MICHIGAN'S GRAND RAPIDS

I took a bullet for democracy: Trump in first rally after assassination bid

MICHIGAN: "I took a bullet for democracy," former US President Donald Trump said on Saturday, addressing a first rally after he was shot in the ear during an assassination attempt on his life last week, The Hill reported.

Trump returned to the campaign trail in Michigan's Grand Rapids, days after accepting the Republican nomination for president at the Republican National Convention.

"I don't want to know anything about it. But what they do is misinformation and disinformation, and they keep saying he's a threat to democracy," Trump continued, referring to Democrats. "I'm saying, 'What the hell did I do for democracy? Last week, I took a bullet for democracy,'" Trump said.

Speaking about Project 2025, Trump said, "They're seriously extreme, but I don't know anything about it."

Democrats have tried to tie Trump to Project 2025, a conservative policy platform organised by the Heritage Platform, whose contributors include former Trump administration officials, according to The Hill report. Former US President and his campaign have denied any support for Project 2025.

During the rally, he said, "I stand before you only by the grace of Almighty God." Trump was wearing a smaller beige coloured bandage on his right ear at his rally, different from the larger white one he wore at the Republican National



Convention earlier this week, according to The Hill report.

It was Trump's first rally after surviving an assassination attempt at a rally in Pennsylvania last Saturday. He was shot in the ear and was escorted off the stage by US Service agents. One attendee and the shooter died during the attack, while two others were injured in the shooting incident in Pennsylvania.

Many Trump supporters who came to attend the rally were wearing shirts featuring the im-

age of Trump holding his fist in the air and telling his voters to "fight" as Secret Service agents were escorting him off the stage after the shooting incident in Pennsylvania, CNN reported.

Many of the merchandise tables outside the venue in Michigan's Grand Rapids were selling shirts to attendees as they waited in queues to enter the indoor arena.

At the same rally in Michigan, Republican Vice presidential nominee JD Vance slammed US Vice President Kamala Harris,

questioning her achievements and defending his own loyalty to the country, CNN reported.

Vance said, "There's some bad news actually, Vice President Kamala Harris, she doesn't like me."

"Kamala Harris said something to the effect that... I have no loyalty to this country. Well, I don't know, Kamala, I did serve in the United States Marine Corps and build a business. What the hell have you done other than collect a check?," Vance said.

It was Vance's first rally with former US President Donald Trump after being selected as his running mate. Vance's remarks came after Kamala Harris earlier this week criticised him for saying he would not have certified the election results of 2020.

Harris even compared Vance to former US Vice President Mike Pence, saying that Vance "would have carried out Trump's plan to overturn the 2020 election."

In a video released on Wednesday, Harris said, "Donald Trump has picked his new running mate: JD Vance. Trump looked for someone he knew would be a rubber stamp for his extreme agenda." She further said, "Make no mistake: JD Vance will be loyal only to Trump, not to our country," ABC News reported.

In his remarks at the rally, Vance rejected the media's assessment that Trump and the Republican agenda are "radical" and "dangerous," CNN reported. He was given a warm welcome in Michigan.

SHOPS DAMAGED

French police, protesters clash over La Rochelle reservoirs

PARIS: Several shops were damaged or looted in the French port city of La Rochelle following multiple rallies on Saturday against a local irrigation project.

At least one police officer and five protesters were injured as police attempted to disperse the crowd, using tear gas and water cannons. At the same time, protesters threw projects and launched fireworks at the security forces.

"We were in the demo, they started blocking ahead and behind," said 25-year-old Lilia was quoted as saying the AFP news agency.

"They isolated us off to one side to charge everyone else."

The protesters oppose the construction of massive irrigation reservoirs in La Rochelle. They claim the reservoirs are aimed at helping big farmers and agricultural companies at the expense of smaller



producers and the environment.

Some 2,000 took part in a march that was charged by police and dispersed. Running battles ensued and barricades were erected.

A second, more peaceful march of some 3,000 people, including family groups, marched from the city center toward the site.

Defenders of the project say res-

ervoires will save farms as Europe faces increasingly severe droughts.

In a separate incident earlier on Saturday, some 200 demonstrators, including farmers on tractors,

entered La Pallice port terminal at dawn and set up a street party with music and drinks. They were pushed out by the police, while other vehicles blocked access to the port. Some of the protesters used kayaks to approach the site from the sea.

Far-left radicals

The crowd on Saturday included small regional farmers and environmental activists, with a police source telling the news agency that some 400 participants had joined a so-called "black bloc" of far-left radicals.

Several people, including police officers, were injured and seven protesters were arrested.

What did authorities say?

"A number of radical, extreme left-wing participants have attacked property and rampaged a supermarket," Interior Minister Gerald

Darmanin said in an online post.

"It is hard to see a link to defense of the environment," he added.

He also said that police prevented the radical protests from achieving their objectives, but did not specify what those goals were.

The organizers decided to go ahead with their demonstration, despite an official ban.

A member of the controversial Soulevements de la Terre (Uprisings of the Earth, SLT) group, which the French government tried to ban last year, rejected that the protesters had violent intentions.

On Saturday, "our aim wasn't to clash with law enforcement, it's often law enforcement who aim to clash with us," SLT member Juliette Riviere said.

The intense police response was reminiscent of scenes from a similar protest at the Sainte-Soline reservoir last year that left two protesters in comas.

6 killed, 87 injured in Israeli airstrikes on Yemen port Hodeidah



Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has defended his decision to launch airstrikes on Houthi military infrastructure

LOREM: Israeli airstrikes on Yemen's port city of Hodeidah killed 6 people and injured 87 others, the Houthi-affiliated Al-Masirah TV reported early on Sunday, citing the Health Ministry.

Earlier reports did not cite a death toll and said 80 people were injured.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has defended his decision to launch airstrikes on Houthi military infrastructure at a port in western Yemen.

"The port that was targeted is not an innocent port," Netanyahu said in a video statement posted to X, formerly Twitter.

"It's used as the entry point for weapons that are supplied by Iran to its Houthi terrorist proxies," Netanyahu said. "The Houthis have used those weapons to attack Israel, to attack Arab states in the region, to attack many others."

The Israeli prime minister confirmed that targeting the Yemeni port city of Hodeidah was in retaliation for the Houthi's drone attack Friday in Tel Aviv.

"The aggression of the Houthis goes beyond that single attack. For the past eight months, the Houthis



have launched hundreds of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and drones against Israel," he said.

Netanyahu thanked the United States, Britain, France and other members of the international maritime coalition that was created to repel Houthi attacks on vessels in the Red Sea.

"More than defensive action is needed to curtail the Houthis, offensive action is also needed. It's needed to ensure that Iran's terror proxies pay a price for their brazen aggression," he said.

Netanyahu closed the video with a message for Israel's enemies, saying: "Make no mistake. We will defend ourselves by all means, on all fronts."

Houthi-affiliated TV: At least 80 hurt in Israel strikes on Hodeidah

At least 80 people were wounded in Israeli airstrikes on targets in Yemen's port city

of Hodeidah, a Houthi-affiliated TV channel said, citing the Health Ministry.

Al-Masirah TV said most of those injured had severe burns.

The channel did not immediately report any deaths.

A correspondent for the AFP news agency in Hodeida reported hearing several large explosions and seeing smoke over the port.

Al-Masirah showed footage of casualties being treated in hospital, many of them bandaged and lying on stretchers in packed rooms.

The broadcaster interviewed a man who said many of the wounded were port employees.

Israel's military said it targeted the military infrastructure of Yemen's Houthi rebels in airstrikes on the war-torn country, DW's correspondent Tania Krämer said from Israel.

She was speaking after Israeli

fighter jets struck the Red Sea port city of Hodeidah on Saturday.

"They [the Israeli military] described them [the targets] as military infrastructure, infrastructure of dual-use and energy infrastructure," Krämer added.

Israel carried out the attacks in apparent retaliation for a Houthi drone strike on the Israeli city of Tel Aviv on Friday that killed one person.

As well as targeting shipping in the Red Sea in recent months, the Iran-backed Houthis have struck Israel's southern city of Eilat over the past month with over 220 drones, Krämer said.

But she said Friday's Houthi drone attack on Tel Aviv was a "change of equation" for Israel.

Krämer cited Israeli officials as saying, "the time for restraint is over." Israel strikes Yemen after deadly Tel Aviv attack

Israel says it intercepted missile fired by Houthis

The Israeli military said it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by Houthi militants in Yemen targeting the southern city of Eilat.

It said the missile was intercepted before reaching Israeli territory.

Hours earlier, Israeli warplanes struck several targets in the militia-controlled port city of Hodeidah in Yemen. That strike was in response to an earlier Houthi strike that hit Tel Aviv on Friday.

Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdulsalam said the strikes made its forces more determined to support Gaza.

Iran-aligned groups, including the Houthis, have fired rockets and missiles at Israel, saying they are doing so in support of Palestinians and the militant group Hamas that controls Gaza. **-DW**

UN chief concerned over airstrikes on Yemen

NEW YORK: United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has expressed deep concern over Israel's recent airstrikes in and around Hodeidah Port in Yemen.

The Israeli entity has claimed responsibility for the strikes, justifying that the attack comes in response to previous Houthi attacks on the Israeli entity.

Initial reports indicated a number of fatalities and over 80 people injured as a result of the Israeli entity's attack, and that there has been considerable damage to civilian infrastructure.

In a statement issued by his spokesperson's office, Guterres called on all parties concerned to avoid attacks that could harm civilians and damage civilian infrastructure.

The UN Secretary-General expressed his deep concern about the risk of further escalation in the region and continues to urge all to exercise utmost restraint.

Yemen news agency (Saba) reported earlier that the Israeli strikes targeted oil tanks in the port of Hodeidah and the power station in the governorate, causing a fire to erupt in oil derivatives tanks.

The Yemeni Ministry of Health reported, shortly after, that the attack killed three persons and injured 87 others.

An official source in the Yemeni



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

government expressed condemnation in the strongest terms of the Israeli raids and the violation of the sovereignty of Yemeni lands, describing the Israeli raids as a clear violation of all international laws and norms.

The source called on the international community and the Security Council to shoulder their responsibilities in order to protect international peace and security.

The Houthis have been targeting commercial shipping in the Red Sea with drone strikes since shortly after Israel began its offensive in Gaza last October.

Israel's military operation was launched following the unprecedented October 7 attacks on Israel by the Palestinian group Hamas. **-ONA**

GCC welcomes ICJ's opinion on Palestine

RIYADH: The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has welcomed the opinion issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ), regarding the illegality of the continuing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and Gaza for 57 years.

The GCC Secretary General Jassem Mohamed Al Budaivi said that this legal opinion confirms and reinforces the Palestinian people's attainment of their legitimate and legal rights in accordance with international and United Nations resolutions to regain the Palestinian territories seized by the Israeli occupation forces.

The settlement decisions and attempts to change the geography carried out by the Israeli occupation forces are illegitimate measures that do not enjoy any regional or international recognition, and do not change anything on the ground, stressing that the

seized Palestinian territories will remain Palestinian and an inherent right of the Palestinian people, the statement said.

It reiterated the firm positions of the GCC countries towards the Palestinian cause, and support for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state within the borders of 4 June 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and support for the rights of the Palestinian people to obtain their state.

EU supports ICJ's opinion

BRUSSELS: The High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell said that the International Court of Justice's (ICJ) advisory opinion on the occupied Palestinian territory is largely consistent with EU positions. **-ONA**



HEAD-ON COLLISION



22 killed in Bolivia road accident

LA PAZ: A traffic accident in Bolivia left 22 people dead and 16 others injured.

The head-on collision between a truck and a bus took place on a highway in the Bolivian Andes, between the Bolivian town of Patacamaya and the town of Tambo Quemado in northern Chile, according to the Bolivian police.

The bus had been heading toward Chile on the busy commercial and tourism route linking the two South American countries.

Initial investigation showed that the truck had crossed into the opposite lane while trying to overtake a vehicle. Images of the accident shared by Bolivian satellite channel, Unitel, showed the bus with its front section shattered and the smashed truck.

Bolivia sees about 1,400 traffic deaths each year, government statistics show. **-ONA**

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UNHEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Gaza Strip children facing difficult conditions: UNICEF

NEW YORK: The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that children in the Gaza Strip face difficult conditions amid the spread of skin diseases, an unhealthy environment, and endless hostilities.

In a post on X platform, UNICEF said that "children in Gaza are dealing with overwhelming conditions, including skin diseases, unsanitary environments and unending hostilities", stressing that "a ceasefire is needed now".

The Israeli entity continues its genocide against the Gaza Strip, ignoring the UN Security Council resolutions to stop it immediately, and the orders of the International Court of Justice to end the invasion of the south of Rafah, and to take measures to prevent acts of genocide and improve the dire humanitarian situation.

IOF Shoots Young Palestinian in Southwest Bethlehem

The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) shot a young Palestinian



man at a military checkpoint in the village of Jab'a, southwest of Bethlehem earlier today, injuring the young civilian.

Palestinian news agency

(Wafa) reported, citing security sources, that the IOF fired live bullets at a young man at a military checkpoint in Jab'a, wounding him in the knee, without

knowing his identity.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) crews transferred the injured person to Al-Hussein Hospital in Beit Jala. **-ONA**

SPORTS

Piastri claims first GP win in Hungary

Team-mate Norris belatedly hands back lead in McLaren intra-team drama during the Hungarian Grand Prix at the Hungaroring on Sunday

BUDAPEST: Oscar Piastri clinched his debut Grand Prix victory at the Hungaroring in Hungary on Sunday after intra-team drama played out, with McLaren team-mate Lando Norris belatedly responding to an order to hand back the lead to the Australian who had lost out due to the team's pit stop strategy.

After the duo went three abreast with Red Bull's Max Verstappen off the line, Piastri emerged as the leader into Turn 1 and from there led much of the Grand Prix. However, when Norris was pitted first during the second round of stops – seemingly to cover off Lewis Hamilton behind – the Briton was the one to emerge ahead.

This prompted the team to make several calls to Norris to give back the position to his fellow McLaren driver, an order that he seemed reluctant to follow for many laps.



However, on Lap 68 of 70, Norris slowed down and allowed Piastri to pass.

The 23-year-old went on to take the win, two seconds up the road

from Norris. Lewis Hamilton, meanwhile, claimed the final podium position in third for Mercedes, having faced drama of his own after contact with Max Verstappen during a late-race battle.

Charles Leclerc was fourth for Ferrari, while Verstappen dropped down to fifth and will also be investigated by the stewards for his incident with Hamilton. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz followed in sixth, ahead of the Red Bull of Sergio Perez who made ground from his P16 starting position.

George Russell also took points after starting back in P17, having crossed the line in P8, while RB's Yuki Tsunoda and Aston Martin's Lance Stroll completed the top-10.

Fernando Alonso just missed

out in P11 for Aston Martin, ahead of Daniel Ricciardo who had a somewhat disappointing day in the RB after lining up in P9 on the grid.

Nico Hulkenberg took 13th place in the Haas, while Alex Albon followed for Williams in 14th and Kevin Magnussen put his Haas into 15th place.

Kick Sauber's search for points continues as Valtteri Bottas ended the day in P16, with Williams' Logan Sargeant behind in P17.

Alpine's tough weekend also endured as Esteban Ocon took P18, while Kick Sauber's Zhou Guanyu was the final classified runner in P19. Pierre Gasly became the sole retiree after suffering a suspected hydraulic leak in the Alpine. - Agencies

TENNIS

Borges stuns Nadal in Swedish Open final

BASTAAD: World No.51 Nuno Borges beat Rafael Nadal 6-3, 6-2 to win the Swedish Open in Bastad on Sunday.

Spaniard Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam champion, slipped to a resounding defeat in his first final since 2022.

Hampered by injury in recent years, the 38-year-old has fallen to 261 in the rankings and opted against playing at Wimbledon this summer to prioritise the Olympics.

Portuguese Borges, playing his first ATP final compared to Nadal's

131st, took the first set in 46 minutes and won three games in a row in the second to seal victory.

"It's crazy. I know we all wanted Rafa to win - a part of me wished that too - but something even bigger inside of me really pushed through today," said 27-year-old

Borges. "I was wishing for this moment for a while already.

"I'm just really happy overall. I really don't know what to say. I'm very emotional."

The 2024 Olympic Games tennis tournament begins in Paris on 27 July. - Agencies

SECOND TEST: ENGLAND VS WEST INDIES

Root, Brook tons set Windies 385 target



NOTTINGHAM: Joe Root followed Harry Brook to his century on the fourth day as England set West Indies a target of 385 to win the second Test at Trent Bridge and draw level in the series on Sunday.

Jayden Seales took four wickets in England's second innings to help bowl them out for 425 after they had reached 416 in their first. It was the first time England had scored 400 in both innings of a Test match.

By tea on the fourth day, Root had departed for 122, his 32nd Test century, and moved to eighth on the all-time Test run-scorers list with 11,940.

Seales had struck twice in the morning session, while another wicket on last ball before lunch to Kevin Sinclair lifted West Indies from a position where the match looked to be slipping beyond their reach. During that time, Root and Brook added 100 runs to England's overnight score but the hosts lost three wickets for 19 runs in 7.2 overs.

Brook and Root united for a 198-run stand for the fourth wicket after Ollie Pope and Ben Duckett had fallen in quick succession on the third day, themselves having each passed fifty and put on 119 runs together.

Brook brought up his fifth Test ton - and first on home soil - nudging Alzarri Joseph for a single to mid-on and, two balls later, Root clipped one to the leg side to bring up his fifty.

Brook fell after the first drinks break, wafting at a Seales delivery that moved away slightly off the seam, found the edge and

sailed through to Joshua Da Silva behind the stumps.

Seales struck again when he removed Ben Stokes cheaply, turning a short ball straight to Alzarri Joseph at backward square leg.

That brought Jamie Smith to the crease and he managed only 6 before Sinclair drew a faint edge with a delivery on off stump and Da Silva gathered.

Moments after Chris Woakes edged a rising Shamar Joseph delivery towards second slip, where the towering Jason Holder took a sharp catch moving to his left with arms outstretched above his head, Root raised his century with a thumping drive through deep point for four off Alzarri Joseph.

Holder returned to the attack and made the breakthrough, Root smashing a full, wide delivery straight to cover, where Kirk McKenzie took a sharp catch. Root left the field to hearty applause from the crowd and handshakes from his opponents.

Seales saw two slips catches put down off Mark Wood in successive balls, but made no mistake with the third when he bowled Wood for a duck with the next, a fuller ball just outside off which seamed in and clattered into the top of off stump.

Seales' fourth wicket ended England's innings, Shoaib Bashir the last man out, bowled by a yorker.

Brief scores: England: 416 and 425 (Root 122, Brook 109, Duckett 76, Pope 51; Seales 4-94) lead West Indies 457 (Hodge 120, Da Silva 82*, Athanaze 82; Woakes 4-84). - Agencies

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FROM 3 YEARS / 30,000 KMS (whichever is earlier)

UP TO 10 YEARS / 100,000 KMS (whichever is earlier)

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Campaign Period: 01.06.2024 - 01.08.2024. Benefits applicable for all purchases except Government Organizations & Ministries. *Cash gift in lieu of insurance. Cash Gift is given in Lieu of Insurance only as applicable for respective models. In case customer chooses Insurance (as applicable), benefit will not be eligible for "Cash gift in lieu of insurance" offer. **Comprehensive 1 Year Insurance (Oman only, excluding diesel grades) on Yaris, Corolla, Corolla Cross, Camry, Camry HEV, Razole, Urban Cruiser, Veloz, RAV4, RAV4 HEV, Fortuner, Hilux, Like Ace & Innova. Insurance benefit under the campaign would be given upto the extent applicable for Private vehicles only. Additional premium as per insurance norms will have to be paid by the RAC, Taxi & Driving School Company. ***3 Years / 30,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 3 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions (Excluding DSG, grades) on Fortuner, LC Wagon, LC pickup, LCPD, Hilux, Like Ace, Innova and Crown. ****10 Years / 100,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 8 services at 7500 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on Urban Cruiser. *****10 Years / 100,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 4 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on Veloz, RAV4, RAV4 HEV. *****15 Years / 50,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 5 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on Corolla Cross, Camry, Camry HEV, RAV4Z. *****10 Years / 100,000 Kms Service (whichever is earlier) covering 10 services at 10,000 Kms service interval based on normal operating conditions on Yaris and Corolla. \$ Grand Raffle International Holiday package for 4 Pax (3 nights, 4 days) to Turkey - 1 Unit iPhone 15 Pro Max - 10 Units. Tentative raffle dates: 23.06.2024, 01.07.2024, 08.07.2024, 15.07.2024, 22.07.2024, 11.08.2024. In case of any cancellation of the purchase due to any reason, the raffle coupon will become invalid. The raffle will be applicable for all Toyota customers who purchase cars during the campaign period. *****EMI Holiday: Three months instalment holiday is applicable for select models and individual customers through select Finance Companies only, subject to approvals. The EMI equated monthly instalment will start after three months from the date of delivery note and continue for the approved tenure / period. Vehicles may include dealer-installed items. For further details & to ascertain availability of stocks, please visit your nearest Toyota showroom. Pictures and colours shown above are for illustrative purposes only. Campaign will not be applicable for ministry and government deals/supplies.

MINERALISED BELTS
Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources has announced in a press release the launch of its most extensive mineralised belts to date, covering an expansive 4,788 km² that includes five exploration licenses.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER
The MSX index closed at 4,682.80 points, down by 0.31% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.49% at 450.56 points. Salalah Mills, up 9.94%, was the top gainer while, National Detergent, down 3.38%, was the top loser.

Duqm strengthens its presence on summer tourism map

This year saw the opening of three new hotel establishments, increasing the number of hotel options in Duqm to 15, including 4-star hotels

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) has bolstered its position on the summer tourism map of the Sultanate of Oman by inaugurating new hotel facilities and increasing investments in the sector through the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz).
This year saw the opening of



“The rise in tourism investments and improvements in infrastructure within Sezad has significantly increased tourist arrivals. Sezad is currently implementing service projects to enhance tourism aspects, such as main and secondary roads, electricity and water services, and drainage systems

Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak
Acting CEO of Sezad

three new hotel establishments, increasing the number of hotel options in Duqm to 15, including 4-star hotels. The total number of available hotel rooms in the zone has now exceeded 2,461.
Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, Acting CEO of Sezad stated that the

zone's location midway between Muscat and Salalah makes it an important stop for travellers heading to or coming from Salalah. “Visitors can take a break at one of the hotels, resorts, or serviced apartments available in Duqm, which cater to the needs of tourists

and families.”
He added, noting, “This year saw the opening of three new hotel establishments: Duqm Express Hotel, Al Madina Express Hotel Duqm, and Royal Plaza Hotel Duqm. Last year also witnessed the opening of the Grand Orchid

Hotel Apartments and Duqm Plaza Hotel. These hotels represent a significant addition to the hotel sector in Duqm.”
Akaak pointed out that the hotel sector in Duqm offers various options for visitors, including 4-star hotels such as Crowne Plaza Duqm and Park Inn Resort Duqm, both located on Duqm Beach. Other options include 3-star hotels like Al Madina Hotel and Asian Hotel. The hotel establishments in the zone also feature a range of serviced apartments, such as Ocean Hotel Apartments, Royal Land Suites, Discovery Hotel Apartments, Dar Al Jawhara, Dar Al Dhiyafa, and Duqm Suites. Additionally, there are youth hostels and heritage camps like Azbat Al Maha and Duqm Camp.
Duqm enjoys mild weather year-round, including summertime when temperatures range between 25 and 32 degrees Celsius. This makes it a prime destination on the domestic summer tourism map. Also, Duqm's location on the Arabian Sea, open to the Indian Ocean, and its sandy beaches attract tourists to engage in beach sports. The zone features

several tourist attractions, such as the Rock Garden in the heart of the Wilayat and the Arabian Oryx Sanctuary, less than a two-hour drive from Duqm. Travel agencies organise trips to these sites and offer a variety of activities tailored to tourists' preferences.
Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak stressed that the rise in tourism investments and improvements in infrastructure within the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) has significantly increased tourist arrivals. This growth is especially supported by the direct flights available from Muscat International Airport to Duqm Airport every day of the week.
He explained that the Sezad is currently implementing service projects to enhance tourism aspects, such as main and secondary roads, electricity and water services, and drainage systems. Moreover, the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) is set to construct a coastal road serving the tourist area up to the multi-purpose fishing port, while redeveloping the zone to align with modern urban planning standards.

SINGLE-ENGINE

Airbus to launch first ‘Made in India’ H125 helicopter in 2026

NEW DELHI: The European multinational aerospace company, Airbus will launch its first assembly line for the single-engine H125 helicopter in India, Sunny Guglani, head of Airbus Helicopters in India and South Asia said.
“The plan is to have the first Made-in-India H125 rollout of the assembly line in 2026 that's the plan we're working with TATA,” Guglani told ANI.
Guglani further stated, “This Final Assembly Line (FAL) will actually produce the H125, which will already be EASA-certified quality

assurance, and the airworthy assurance is being taken care of by experts from Airbus Helicopters that will be located at the FAL site in India.”
In January, the company announced its partnership with Tata Group to establish Final Assembly Line (FAL) for helicopters in the country.
The FAL will produce Airbus' best-selling H125 helicopter from its civil range for India and export to some of the neighbouring countries, the company had said in January this year.
Describing the specification of

The FAL will produce Airbus' best-selling H125 helicopter from its civil range for India

H1 25 helicopters, Guglani further said that it is a benchmark single-engine helicopter for Indian and the neighbouring country's market because of its performance in high-altitude environments. The H1 25 is used across segments

from commercial air transportation to corporate missions, VVIP missions, as well as aerial work that's because of the performance of this helicopter, he stated.
He further stated that these helicopters can be used for special missions and other various purposes including “It's a very versatile helicopter; that's why we spoke about it earlier. The different segments where it can be used in India and Nepal—if we look at these two markets, there are more than 60 H125 already flying,” he added.
Highlighting the importance of

the launch, he said the final assembly line will act as a catalyst for the Indian market, bringing value to the masses of the country.
“We believe that helicopters are a big part of nation-building because they act as tools that can make a difference for the lives of the people and the FAL is an implementing step to actually catalyze the market. It also brings benefits to local customers, who will now no longer have to import this H 125 from abroad, they can pay in Indian rupees and from a regulatory point of view,” he said.

FAL, an initiative first for the country, aligns with the Government of India's 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India) programme.
Highlighting the nature of the project, he stated, “Since there is no importation involved. There will be financial benefits for operators buying this helicopter made in India. We have all kinds of missions that this H125 is being used in starting from charter operations to VIP missions and aerial work. So it's a versatile machine and we see the demand for all these kinds of helicopters.” -ANI



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 LINCOLN

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Salalah Mills, up 9.94%, was the top gainer while National Detergent, down 3.38%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,682.80 points, down by 0.31% from previous close. The Shariah Index ended up by 0.49% at 450.56 points. Salalah Mills, up 9.94%, was the top gainer while, National Detergent, down 3.38%, was the top loser. Shares of Sohar International Bank were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while Bank Muscat were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 422 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO1.27 million, with more than 6.26 million shares changing hands. Out of 34 traded securities, 9 advanced, 10 declined, and 15 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 210K while domestic investors were net sellers for RO 180K, followed by foreign investors for RO 30K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at

7,605.06 points, down 0.33%. Prices of Takaful Oman, Al Madina Takaful were up by 4.44%, 1.28% respectively. Prices of Al Anwar Investment, Ahli Bank, Bank Muscat, Sohar International Bank were down by 2.67%, 1.32%, 0.79%, 0.72% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,984.32 points, up 0.15%. Prices of Salalah Mills, Oman Flour Mills were up by 9.94%, 4.29% respectively. Prices of National Detergent, Galfar Engineering, Al Maha Ceramics were down by 3.38%, 3.13%, 0.62% respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.01% before closing at 1,825.03 points. Prices of Barka Desalination, Al Maha Markting, SMN Power Holding, Oman Telecom were up by 4.17%, 2.94%, 0.94%, 0.20% respectively. Prices of Al Suwadi Power, Sembcorp Salalah, Abraj Energy were down by 2.63%, 1.91%, 0.34% respectively.

—United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

MUSCAT
STOCK
EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff%
MSX 30 INDEX	4,697.28	4,682.35	4,682.80	4,697.28	-14.49	-0.31
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,626.57	7,595.90	7,605.06	7,630.49	-25.43	-0.33
Industry Index	6,004.21	5,972.20	5,984.32	5,975.23	9.09	0.15
Services Index	1,827.66	1,818.97	1,825.03	1,825.27	-0.24	-0.01
MSX Shariah Index	450.79	446.95	450.56	448.36	2.20	0.49
MSX TRI INDEX	6,525.00	6,504.26	6,504.88	6,525.00	-20.12	-0.31
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,664.57	8,629.72	8,640.13	8,669.02	-28.89	-0.33
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,927.43	6,890.50	6,904.48	6,894.00	10.48	0.15
SERVICES TR IDX	2,119.54	2,109.45	2,116.49	2,116.76	-0.28	-0.01
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	1,069.10	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
6,269,147	1,267,650	422	24,465,218,955	9	10	15	34

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, JULY 21

ISN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF (RD)	DIFF %	LAST PD	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PAV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	13,450	1,051	3	0.078	0.079	0.078	0.079	0.078	0.001	1.282	0.079	0.077	0.082	0.100	13,825,000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	142,276	142,585	16	1.000	1.010	1.000	1.002	1.000	0.002	0.200	1.002	1.002	1.002	0.100	751,500,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	47,724	2,720	6	0.058	0.059	0.056	0.059	0.059	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.056	0.060	0.100	21,011,511
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	341,500	26,296	23	0.078	0.078	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.000	0.000	0.077	0.076	0.077	0.100	15,400,000
OM0000003968	OOREDOO	110,101	31,389	12	0.286	0.286	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.000	0.000	0.285	0.285	0.285	0.100	185,519,106
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	100,000	7,400	8	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.074	0.000	0.000	0.074	0.073	0.074	0.100	49,941,670
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	2,000	510	2	0.250	0.260	0.250	0.260	0.260	0.000	0.000	0.260	0.255	0.260	0.100	18,301,400
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	857,122	120,819	122	0.140	0.141	0.140	0.141	0.141	0.000	0.000	0.141	0.135	0.148	0.100	610,617,973
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	240,449	71,618	23	0.299	0.299	0.297	0.297	0.298	-0.001	-0.336	0.297	0.286	0.297	0.100	228,749,400
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	1,647,794	227,941	47	0.138	0.139	0.138	0.138	0.139	-0.001	-0.719	0.138	0.138	0.139	0.100	769,659,985
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	1,624,993	409,750	40	0.252	0.253	0.251	0.251	0.253	-0.002	-0.791	0.251	0.249	0.252	0.100	1,884,105,663
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	118,000	12,180	6	0.104	0.104	0.103	0.103	0.105	-0.002	-1.905	0.103	0.100	0.105	0.100	98,320,911
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	321,500	23,999	16	0.075	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.076	-0.002	-2.832	0.074	0.074	0.075	0.100	52,866,069
Total	13	5,566,909	1,078,256	324												
Parallel Market																
OM0000001889	SALALAH MILLS	46,650	22,445	6	0.470	0.531	0.470	0.531	0.483	0.048	9.938	0.531	0.481	0.531	0.100	26,530,387
OM0000004776	TAKAFUL OMAN	2,700	126	2	0.043	0.047	0.043	0.047	0.045	0.002	4.444	0.047	0.044	0.047	0.100	11,750,000
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	198,000	98,208	19	0.490	0.510	0.490	0.510	0.489	0.021	4.294	0.510	0.495	0.530	0.100	80,325,000
OM0000008710	BARKA DESALINATION	330	41	1	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.120	0.005	4.167	0.125	0.115	0.124	0.100	9,440,250
OM0000003000	AL MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	250	263	1	1.050	1.050	1.050	1.050	1.020	0.030	2.941	1.050	1.020	1.050	0.100	72,450,000
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	77,570	25,048	12	0.323	0.323	0.320	0.323	0.320	0.003	0.938	0.323	0.315	0.323	0.100	64,482,299
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	15,832	1,852	3	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.116	0.001	0.862	0.117	0.116	0.117	0.100	59,448,115
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	5,000	1,108	2	0.224	0.224	0.221	0.221	0.221	0.000	0.000	0.221	0.221	0.224	0.100	10,114,241
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	1,700	601	2	0.359	0.359	0.350	0.350	0.350	0.000	0.000	0.350	0.315	0.385	0.100	28,490,963
OM0000005280	OMAN ARAB BANK	20,000	2,840	3	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.142	0.000	0.000	0.142	0.141	0.142	0.100	237,056,220
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	72,896	4,440	12	0.060	0.061	0.060	0.061	0.061	0.000	0.000	0.061	0.056	0.061	0.100	89,218,689
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	107,066	6,852	11	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.064	0.000	0.000	0.064	0.063	0.069	0.100	31,413,529
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	33,239	5,318	8	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.161	-0.001	-0.621	0.160	0.160	0.165	0.100	8,800,000
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	40,000	6,000	2	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.150	0.152	-0.002	-1.316	0.150	0.137	0.000	0.100	352,448,620
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	700	51	1	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.075	-0.002	-2.667	0.073	0.074	0.075	0.100	15,489,140
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	17,115	2,727	5	0.159	0.160	0.155	0.155	0.160	-0.005	-3.125	0.155	0.152	0.159	0.100	31,462,899
OM0000003265	NATIONAL DETERGENT	10,000	7,150	1	0.715	0.715	0.715	0.715	0.740	-0.025	-3.378	0.715	0.690	0.715	0.100	14,300,000
Total	17	649,048	185,071	91												

FIVE EXPLORATION LICENSES

Saudi Arabia unveils record-sized mineralised belts

RIYADH: The Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources has announced in a press release the launch of its most extensive mineralised belts to date, covering an expansive 4,788 km² that includes five exploration licenses. The ministry is inviting major mining and exploration companies to participate in the ongoing Exploration Li-

censing Rounds aimed at unlocking the belts' vast mineral wealth. According to the ministry's official spokesperson, Jarrah bin Mohammed Al-Jarrah, the initiative highlights Saudi Arabia's commitment to fostering a robust mining and minerals sector and creating opportunities for investors to explore the Kingdom's wealth. He

further noted that five exploration licenses are available to local and international mining companies. These licenses are integral to the ministry's strategy of promoting increased exploration investment and aligning with Vision 2030 objectives—aimed at positioning mining as the third pillar of its national industry.

The ministry is calling on major local and international mining and exploration companies to participate in the Exploration Licensing of the following mineralized belts: Three exploration licenses are available at the Jabal Sayad mineralized belt, which covers 2,892 km². The belt includes copper, zinc, lead, gold, and silver. -SPA

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WORLD GREEN ECONOMY SUMMIT

WGES: Global platform supporting transition to green, sustainable economy

DUBAI: Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, the World Green Economy Summit (WGES), launched 10 years ago, has consolidated its position as a cornerstone for achieving the sustainable development goals and the transition to a green economy.

The summit has successfully kept pace with the UAE's leading and relentless efforts in supporting global climate action.

WGES is organised by the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, Dubai Electricity & Water Authority (DEWA), and the World Green Economy Organisation (WGEO). It provides a pioneering platform that brings together prominent experts and specialists in various key sectors from around the world.

The summit fosters the exchange of ideas and experiences and coordinating the efforts of decision-makers and stakeholders in the energy, economy, and climate sectors. It provides innovative solutions and pioneering practices that drive positive change and turn challenges into opportunities, supporting the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

The 10th WGES will be held on 2nd and 3rd October 2024 at the Dubai World Trade Centre under the theme 'Empowering Global Action: Unlocking Opportunities and Advancing Progress'. It will highlight key thematic pillars, including Decarbonisation; Clean Energy Advancements (including Green Hydrogen & Energy Storage); Climate Finance; Circular Economy; Using Technology to Tackle Climate Change; Youth in Climate Change, and Food and Water.

Saeed Mohammed Al Tayer, Vice Chairman of the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, MD&CEO of DEWA, and Chairman of WGEO, emphasised that

WGES 2024 will build on the themes and goals of the past nine editions to provide sustainable global solutions that contribute to achieving a balance between economic development and environmental protection. The summit supports the transition to a green economy, achieving net zero, and enhancing international cooperation in various relevant sectors.

Al Tayer stated that the 10th WGES will host ministers, decision-makers, CEOs, and senior officials from the government and private sectors, and representatives of non-governmental organisations from around the world. They will discuss ways to advance the green economy, enhance effective cooperation in innovation, technology, and green finance, and utilise fruitful partnerships between the government and private sectors to support sustainable development efforts.

The 9th WGES 2023 hosted a diverse cohort of stakeholders, empowering developing regions and encouraging global cooperation and public-private partnerships. WGES 2023 focused on the UAE's priority areas for COP28, which the UAE hosted last year, including mitigation, adaptation, finance, and loss and damage across key pillars.

These included the green policy pillar, which focused on the global stocktake, global carbon

market, national and corporate approaches, sustainable development goals, and policies for a just green transition; and the green finance pillar, which focused on securing access to financing in low- and middle-income countries, de-risking investments, financing technology, the global economic landscape, and private sector solutions.

WGES 2023 also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the World Green Economy Organisation (WGEO) and the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG Africa), to foster sustainable development and green initiatives across the African continent. Additionally, WGEO announced during this edition that 86 countries have joined the Global Alliance on Green Economy (GAGE), and the Dubai Supreme Council of Energy launched the 5th Emirates Energy Award (EEA) 2023- 2025.

The 8th WGES 2022 was held under the theme, 'Climate Action Leadership through Collaboration: The Roadmap to Net-Zero'. The Summit covered several topics including clean energy and decarbonisation of existing energy systems, financing and attracting investments to achieve green development, and promoting sustainable mobility and sustainable transportation networks. -WAM



LIFESTYLE

Health tips: How to prevent cancer



Cancer can often be avoided,

with a few healthy tips.

Scientists know what

causes cancer and we can all do something

to prevent the worst threats.

The World Health Organization

says cancer is a “major contributor

to global mortality.”

It projects that the global cancer

burden will increase by about 77%

by 2050. But at least some forms

of cancer can be avoided.

Destiny is in your hands: Don't smoke

Being diagnosed with cancer is a shock that hits you hard. And yet almost half of all cancer cases could be prevented. Smoking alone triggers about every fifth tumor.

The toxic cigarette smoke does not only cause lung cancer but many other kinds of tumors as well. Smoking is the most frequent self-imposed cause for cancer, but not the only one.

Regarding vaping, the science is a bit thin. But a decade-long study published in 2024 suggested that ex-cigarette smokers who vaped were at a greater risk of lung cancer than those who did not vape.

Being overweight increases cancer risk

In second place of cancer-causing agents: obesity. Why does obesity cause cancer? Enhanced insulin levels increase the risk of almost all sorts of cancer, especially when it comes to kidney, gall bladder, and esophagus cancer.

Overweight women produce increasing amounts of female sex hormones in their fat tissue and hence have a higher risk for uterine or breast cancer.

Get off the couch, get active!

People who don't move enough are especially likely to get cancer.

Long-term studies show that exercising prevents tumors. Working out lowers insulin levels and prevents you from gaining weight. It doesn't have to be high-performance sport. Even just going for a walk or a bike ride makes a big difference.

Avoid red meat, eat fish instead

Long-term studies suggest there's a correlation between the consumption of red meat and intestinal cancer. Beef is especially dangerous, and pork is thought to cause cancer to a minor degree.

Barbecuing meat can release carcinogenic substances, such as polycyclical aromatic hydrocarbons.

Fish, on the other hand, is said to prevent cancer.

Use sunscreen to avoid skin cancer

Sunscreens protect against ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. UV rays can damage skin cells and cause different types of cancer, including melanoma.

The higher the “sun protection factor” the better. Some health bodies recommend using at least factor 30. But the protection you need will depend on your personal skin tone and where you are in the world, so it's best to consult a doctor.

Cancer triggered by modern medicine

X-rays harm genomes. With an ordinary radiogram the exposure is only minor. But it's a different story for computed tomography, which you should only undergo when necessary. Magnetic resonance imaging is harmless. But did you know that you're even exposed to cancer-causing radiation when you're on an airplane?

Cancer triggered by infection

Human papillomaviruses can cause cervical cancer.

Hepatitis B and C can cause hepatocytes to degenerate. The bacterium helicobacter pylori settles in your stomach and can cause stomach cancer.

But you can get vaccinated against many of these pathogens and antibiotics help fight helicobacter pylori.

The pill: Better than its reputation

The oral contraceptive pill can increase the risk of breast cancer, but it can also decrease the risk of ovarian cancer. Consult your personal doctor to find out what is best for you.

Some cancer can't be avoided

But even if you do everything right, you're never completely immune from getting cancer. Half of all cancer cases are caused by the wrong genes or age. Brain cancer is particularly likely to be inherited. -ww

SPORTS

Horschel leads at The Open

On a wild day of rain, the American held a two-shot lead going into the final round at Royal Troon

TROON: Billy Horschel with his brilliant short game at Royal Troon Golf Club somehow held on for a 2-under 69 and a one-shot lead in an Open Championship that got turned upside down and every other possible way on Saturday. English pair Justin Rose and Dan Brown are one shot behind leader American Horschel after a dramatic third round of The Open at rain-lashed Royal Troon. Horschel, playing in the worst of the conditions, somehow fashioned a two-under-par 69 to improve to four under. Rose and Brown are among six players, including US PGA Championship winner Xander Schauffele, on three under. South African Thruston Lawrence and Americans Sam Burns and Russell Henley are also one off the lead, having made their scores before the rain set in. Lawrence played the front nine in six under par as the high winds of the opening two days abated. He



signed for a 65, as did Burns, while Henley shot a 66. World No.1 Scottie Scheffler is at two under after a 71. Horschel, who was playing with Rose, summed up the brutal conditions on the closing stretch, where the wind had turned from the opening two days from helping to hindering, by saying "we played five par-fives on the back side, not including the par-five 16th". He had four birdies in his opening nine holes to get to six under and then hung on over the back nine.

"This is by far my best round in really tough conditions in an Open Championship," he added. "I enjoy hitting little bunt shots. I get tired of golf where you're making full swings and you lean into a certain number and it stops. "I like when you have to be creative and find a way to get around the golf course." Ireland's Shane Lowry, who led on seven under after two rounds, collapsed to a six-over 77, his troubles starting with a double-bogey five on the notoriously difficult

Postage Stamp eighth. He then had five bogeys on the back nine, his final one coming after he hit his second shot into the grandstand down the right of the 18th. But at one under par and with more rain forecast to disrupt the final round, the 2019 champion is still in contention. Rose, who had three bogeys and one birdie in a typically gutsy 73, gave a huge fist pump after holing a six-footer for par at the last. "I found it really hard to enjoy the day," said the 43-year-old, who

won the 2013 US Open and 2016 Olympic title. "I felt like it was good energy from the crowd, but with everyone with umbrellas up, no one is clapping; everyone is more shouting and cheering, wanting high fives. "I normally engage in that type of stuff; today I just had my head down. I was not interested in anything. I was just trying to get around the golf course and hang in there. "So to be able to go and have a moment on 18 where I could just let it out a little bit, just to show

that I am super-excited about the support, was big because until that point I was just grinding." World number 272 Brown has defied odds and expectation since leading on day one. And he looked poised to lead into the final round when he birdied the par-five 16th to get to six under. However, the 2016 English Amateur champion bogeyed the par-three 17th after finding a bunker off the tee and then hit a six at the par-four last to drop from leader by one, to in the chasing pack. "It was a bit of a sting on the last two holes through not really hitting a bad golf shot," he said. Brown will play with Scheffler in Sunday's final round after the Masters champion battled to a 71 to stay two under. "That was probably the hardest nine holes I've played," he said, referring to the back nine. Discussing the 238-yard 17th, and then the 502-yard 15th, he added: "I probably don't hit a three-wood on a par-three very often. I probably don't hit driver and a three-wood really solid on a par-four and don't get there in two, either." There are six major champions in the top 10, with Adam Scott and Justin Thomas at level par after they enjoyed easier early conditions to post 66 and 67 respectively. And England's Matthew Jordan, who impressed on his home course in finishing joint 10th at Royal Liverpool last year, is also at level par after his third successive 71. - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Rangnick was right: ManU's Ten Hag

LONDON: Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag says former interim boss Ralf Rangnick was "absolutely right" about the club needing "open-heart" surgery. Ten Hag, 54, was appointed manager in 2022 after Rangnick's seven months in charge. The German, now in charge of Austria, guided United to sixth in the Premier League but won just 11 of his 29 matches. Rangnick concluded that the club required "open-heart" surgery and their troubles could not be solved through "minor changes". Ten Hag, who signed a one-year contract extension this month, says Rangnick's analysis was correct. "Rangnick was absolutely right," Ten Hag said in an interview with Dutch newspaper AD Sportwereld. "We have been working very hard on this for two years, but he said it exactly right: it is a thor-



ough, very complex operation. And I knew when I started that it was going to be a tough job." United have undergone major changes off the pitch since Sir Jim Ratcliffe acquired a 27.7% stake in the club last December. Omar Berrada, Dan Ashworth, Jason Wilcox and Christopher Vivell have all joined in positions at board level this year, while the

club have committed £50m to improving the training ground. Forward Joshua Zirkzee and defender Leny Yoro have joined from Bologna and Lille respectively in the past week, while Ten Hag has confirmed interest in Bayern Munich and Netherlands centre-back Matthijs de Ligt. "It remains to be seen whether De Ligt will come," said Ten Hag.

"Of course I know Matthijs well, I'm not going to deny that. I wanted to sign him two years ago, but he had already gone a long way with Bayern Munich." Despite working with De Ligt at former club Ajax, Ten Hag says it was United's scouting department that suggested the centre-back as a transfer target. Ten Hag also confirmed that forward Jadon Sancho, who last appeared for the club in August 2023 and spent the second half of last season on loan at Dortmund after falling out with the manager, is available again for selection. "Everyone can make a mistake," said Ten Hag. Sancho and Yoro both started as goals for Amad Diallo and Joe Huggill saw United beat Rangers 2-0 at Murrayfield in a friendly on Saturday. "The standard was much better, we were much more on the front foot," Ten Hag told MUTV. "It was enjoyable to watch." - Agencies

ITALIAN SERIE A

AC Milan sign Spain striker Morata from Atletico Madrid

MILAN: AC Milan have signed Spain forward Alvaro Morata from Atletico Madrid on a four-year contract with an option for a further 12 months. The Serie A side triggered Morata's release clause - which was reportedly, external about £11m - in order to sign him. The 31-year-old captained Spain to victory in Euro 2024 earlier this month. Morata made his professional debut with Real Madrid and has also played for Juventus and Chelsea. He won the Champions League twice in two spells at Real Madrid and lifted the Italian title twice with Juventus. Morata, who won the FA Cup with Chelsea, has scored 36 goals



in 80 matches for Spain. Morata scored once in seven games during the recently-concluded Euro 2024, which Spain won. - Agencies

LAST MEET AHEAD OF PARIS OLYMPICS

Pryce, Bol and Hudson-Smith sizzle at Diamond League meet



LONDON: Nickisha Pryce, Femke Bol and Matt Hudson-Smith displayed sensational form over a lap of the track at the London Athletics Meet on Saturday during the final Wanda Diamond League meeting ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. At a meeting with a sell-out crowd of almost 60,000 people, Pryce and Bol set Diamond League records in the women's 400m flat and 400m hurdles respectively, while Hudson-Smith smashed his own European record in the men's 400m. Pryce, who had won the NCAA title last month in a Jamaican record of 48.89, was making her Diamond League debut but clearly wasn't intimidated by the occasion. Lieke Klaver of the Netherlands led to half way, as she often does. But Pryce kicked hard coming off the final bend and pulled away from European champion Natalia Kaczmarek, charging through the line in 48.57.

Not only is that mark a Diamond League record - bettering the 48.97 set by Shaunae Miller-Uibo in Monaco exactly six years ago to the day - it also elevates Pryce to seventh on the world all-time list, ahead of the likes of Cathy Freeman and Sanya Richards-Ross. Kaczmarek crossed the line in second in 48.90, taking 0.08 off the Polish record she set at the European Championships and marking just the seventh time in history in which two women have bettered 49 seconds in the same race. One week after breaking her own European record in the 400m hurdles, Bol returned to the scene of one of her previous European record-breaking performances and produced the second-fastest time of her career. Rushell Clayton matched Bol through the first half, but the world champion pulled away over the final 200 metres to win comfortably in 51.30 - a 0.15 improvement on the Diamond League record



she set at this meeting last year. Shamier Little came through to take second spot in 52.78 ahead of Clayton (53.24). Hudson-Smith extended his winning streak in the men's 400m, producing a run that strengthens his status as a gold medal contender heading into the Olympics. The world silver medallist led from the outset and opened up a significant gap over USA's Vernon Norwood and Jereem Richards to win in 43.74, becoming the first European man to run inside 44 seconds and moving to 12th on the world all-time list. Norwood (44.10), Richards (44.20) and Charlie Dobson (44.23) were all rewarded with PBs. Kirani James - who won Olympic gold on this track 12 years ago - was fifth in a season's best of 44.38. **British record for Hodgkinson** Moments before Hudson-Smith's

record-breaking run, there were also national records in the women's 800m, courtesy of Keely Hodgkinson, and in the women's 4x100m. Hodgkinson, the world and Olympic silver medallist, went through half way in 56.5, almost a full second behind the pacemaker and just ahead of compatriot Jemma Reekie. She then kicked hard coming off the final bend and pulled well clear to win by exactly one second in 1:54.61. US champion Gabby Thomas came from behind to win the women's 200m in a meeting record of 21.82 (-0.9m/s). Dina Asher-Smith led into the home straight, but Thomas and world indoor 60m champion Julien Alfred were locked in their own battle in lanes six and seven, pushing one another into the lead. Earlier in the day, the British duo teamed up with Imani Lansiquot and Amy Hunt in the 4x100m, winning in a world-leading 41.55,



equalling the national record they set at the Tokyo Olympic Games. Elsewhere in the sprints, world champion Noah Lyles battled all the way through the 100m to win in a lifetime best of 9.81 (-0.3m/s). Akani Simbine and Letsile Tebogo put up a strong challenge for most of the way, but eventually had to settle for second (9.86) and third (9.88) respectively. Brazil's 2022 world champion Alison dos Santos was a convincing winner of the men's 400m hurdles in 47.18. Jamaica's Roshawn Clarke produced a season's best of 47.63 to take second, which Qatar's Ismail Doudai Abakar smashed his lifetime best by almost a second to finish third in 47.72. World champions Ryan Crouser and Haruka Kitaguchi both suffered rare defeats as Leonardo Fabbri took the men's shot put and Mackenzie Little won the women's javelin. World champion Nina Kennedy overcame a mid-competition scare

to win the women's pole vault. The Australian needed three attempts to get over 4.65m, but then went on to clear 4.85m to secure the win ahead of Canada's Alysha Newman (4.75m). Following a last-minute withdrawal of Olympic champion Mutaz Barshim, world indoor champion Hamish Kerr won the men's high jump with 2.30m. Olympic champion Malaika Mihambo returned to winning ways in the women's long jump, her opening leap of 6.87m standing up as the best mark of the day. Agate de Sousa produced a final-round leap of 6.75m to move into second. European 10,000m champion Dominic Lokinyomo Lobalu out-sprinted USA's Grant Fisher to win the men's 3,000m in a meeting record of 7:27.68, the fastest time in the world this year on an outdoor track. Fisher was second in 7:27.99 and Kenya's Edwin Kurgat third (7:28.53). - Agencies

IN PICTURES



People participate in Festival Memet Ikan, or fish catching festival, at Gemblegan village in Klaten regency, Central Java, Indonesia, July 21, 2024. [Xinhua](#)



A dressed-up girl attends the Junior Carnival Parade of the 2024 Toronto Caribbean Carnival in Toronto, Canada, on July 20, 2024. The annual event kicked off here on Saturday with thousands of young participants in vibrant costumes celebrating Caribbean culture with music and dance. [Xinhua](#)

Malaysia's new king Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar (centre L) attends the installation ceremony in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, July 20, 2024. Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar was formally installed as Malaysia's new king on Saturday, as part of a grand ceremony marking the event held at the National Palace in Kuala Lumpur. [Xinhua](#)



Fireworks performed by Team Portugal light up the sky at English Bay in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, on July 20, 2024. Vancouver's summer fireworks festival Celebration of Light kicked off with Team Portugal on Saturday, followed by performances by Team Malaysia on July 24 and Team United Kingdom on July 27. [Xinhua](#)



Fireworks light up the sky during the rehearsal of Singapore's National Day Parade in Marina Bay, Singapore. [Xinhua](#)



People riding motorbikes wade through a flooded road after heavy rain in southern Pakistani port city of Karachi on July 20, 2024. [Xinhua](#)

ROUND-UP

Experience luxury Changan UNI-K 4WD with AI features

Its AI-Level 2 capabilities can enhance your driving experience through features like intelligent voice control, adaptive cruise control, and automated parking assistance

MUSCAT: The Changan UNI-K 4WD is a luxurious vehicle that offers a combination of comfort, style, and advanced features such as artificial intelligence.

Its AI-Level 2 capabilities can enhance your driving experience through features like intelligent voice control, adaptive cruise control, and automated parking assistance. If you're looking for a premium driving experience with cutting-edge technology, the Changan UNI-K 4WD might be the perfect choice for you.

Changan UNI-K boasts a sleek and streamlined exterior design, combining modern aesthetics with dynamic elements. Its unique exterior styling and attention to detail showcase a blend of fashion



and technological sophistication. In terms of performance, the UNI-K is equipped with an efficient powertrain, featuring a robust engine and advanced suspension system, delivering an outstanding driving experience.

From the moment you lay eyes on the UNI-K, its striking elegance and futuristic design capture your attention. Sleek lines

and aerodynamic contours seamlessly combine with features like electrically folding ORVMs, enhancing both aesthetics and functionality. Beneath this stunning exterior lies a powerful 2.0-litre turbocharged engine, delivering an impressive 233 horsepower. Paired with an 8-speed automatic transmission, the UNI-K offers a driving experience that is both

thrilling and effortlessly smooth.

Step inside the UNI-K, and you are greeted by a sanctuary of opulence and comfort. The interior is a masterpiece of premium materials and meticulous craftsmanship. The eight-way Electrically Adjustable Driver Seat with Electric Lumbar Support and the four-way Electrically Adjustable Co-driver Seat ensure unparalleled comfort

on every journey, regardless of distance.

Technological innovation is at the heart of the UNI-K. A triple HD screen setup, featuring a 12.3" Infotainment system, keeps you seamlessly connected and entertained. The premium audio system, boasting 12 speakers, offers an immersive listening experience. Convenience is elevated

with features like the streaming inside rearview mirror and remote engine start/stop functionality, making every drive a pleasure.

Versatility is another hallmark of the UNI-K. The rear seats can be almost fully flattened, transforming the trunk space from an impressive 518 litres to a cavernous 1,412 litres. This adaptability makes the UNI-K the perfect companion for any adventure, whether it's a daily commute or a spontaneous weekend getaway.

Safety is supreme in the UNI-K, with a comprehensive suite of features designed to protect and assist. Front, Side, and Curtain Airbags provide comprehensive protection, while systems like ABS, EBD, BA, TCS, HHC, HDC, and DBF ensure stability and control. Advanced safety features such as the 360° Panoramic View, Adaptive Cruise Control, and Automatic Emergency Brake further enhance security, ensuring peace of mind on every drive.

With its 4WD capability, robust safety features, and state-of-the-art technology, the Changan UNI-K stands out in the luxury compact SUV category. Its dimensions offer ample space and a commanding road presence, making it an excellent choice for those who demand elegance, innovation, and safety in their driving experience.

Know the Changan UNI-K and elevate your driving to a new level of luxury and innovation. This crossover SUV is more than just a vehicle; it's a declaration of style, power, and cutting-edge technology, promising an experience that is as exhilarating as it is refined.

PREMIUM CROSSOVER

Bestune T99 showcases masterful craftsmanship and unmatched performance

MUSCAT: In a market teeming with premium crossovers, the Bestune T99 emerges as a beacon of style, power, and practicality. This vehicle is a statement of sophistication and innovation, crafted for those who appreciate the finer things in life.

Under the hood, the T99 houses a robust two-litre turbocharged engine, unleashing 220 HP and 340 Nm of torque. Paired with a seamless six-speed automatic transmission, this powerhouse ensures a smooth yet exhilarating drive. Its dimensions—4800mm long, 1915mm wide, and 1685mm high, supported by a solid 2870mm wheelbase—exude a commanding presence, turning heads wherever it goes.

The Bestune T99 limousine edition elevates luxury to unprecedented heights. Featuring advanced technology and a suite of safety and comfort enhancements, it stands out in its class.

A panoramic camera offers a comprehensive 3D view, while lane-keeping assistance, adaptive cruise control, and forward collision warnings ensure peace of mind on every journey.

The automatic emergency braking system, combined with front and curtain airbags, adds an extra layer of security.

Convenience and entertainment are vital in the T99. Electrically folding mirrors, twin 12.3-inch screens, and a touchscreen for managing vehicle functions epitomize modern luxury. The sensor-activated trunk lid and a six-speaker audio system further enhance the driving experience, blending



This vehicle is a statement of sophistication and innovation

practicality with pleasure.

Externally, the T99 boasts 19-inch alloy wheels and sleek LED lighting, including puddle lamps and daytime running lights, which accentuate its elegant design. Inside, a panoramic sunroof, leather seats with electric adjustments, paddle shifters, push-button start, and an automated parking system create an atmosphere of opulence and ease.

The premium variant of the T99 takes these features even further. It includes 20-inch alloy wheels, LED headlights and taillights, and headlamps that adjust to driving conditions. The interior is adorned with leather seats

that are heated and electrically adjustable, a telescopic steering wheel, wood accents, ambient foot lighting, dual-zone automatic climate control, and rear air conditioning vents.

Safety remains a cornerstone of the T99, with an auto-hold function, front, side, and curtain airbags, front parking sensors, and a panoramic camera providing a 3D perspective. The vehicle also offers an automatic boot with memory settings, cruise control, keyless entry, and a touchscreen for seamless operation.

The Bestune T99 redefines the luxury crossover segment with its exceptional blend of elegance, efficiency, and cutting-edge technology. Whether navigating urban streets or embarking on extended journeys, the T99 offers an exhilarating yet refined driving experience, making it the ideal choice for those who demand excellence in every aspect of their vehicle.

OPULENCE MEETS TRANQUILITY

The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat resort redefines exquisite summer staycations



MUSCAT: Prepare to indulge in the ultimate luxury staycation this summer at The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort where opulence meets tranquility.

Nestled in the Al Mouj Muscat community, the resort stands as a beacon of sophistication offering locals and residents a chance to escape the ordinary and embrace the extraordinary.

The "Exquisite Getaway" package and the "Unwind and Dine" package both promise a memorable getaway experience with exceptional room rates. Guests will savour a breakfast buffet for two at Karibu, enjoy 20% savings at select restaurants, and have access to the resort's world-class facilities, including a state-of-the-art gym. The

packages also include special welcome amenities, dedicated butler service, complimentary pressing and late check-out subject to availability. The "Unwind and Dine" offer sets itself apart by including a dinner for two at Karibu, where flavours from Zanzibar, India, and Oman come together in a delectable culinary symphony.

"We are absolutely delighted to present these exclusive summer packages at our newly revealed heaven of glamour in the beating heart of Muscat," said Tarek Mourad, General Manager of The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort. "Our aim is to create an unforgettable rejuvenating experience that combines the epitome of luxury accommodations with unparal-

leled personalised service and outstanding amenities. We invite our guests to unwind from the hustle and bustle of life and immerse themselves in the majesty of Omani hospitality, all while indulging in the highest standards of opulence and comfort."

The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort stands as a pinnacle of luxury in Al Mouj Muscat, Oman's premier lifestyle destination. With its breathtaking beachfront location, spacious rooms, diverse culinary venues, and world-class amenities such as the soon-to-open Guerlain Spa and the Al Mouj Golf course, the resort offers an immersive luxury experience that seamlessly blends local charm and global sophistication.



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