

He said the project took two years and one month to complete, from the announcement of the winners to the completion of construction. The Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth appointed a South Korean contractor with extensive experience in building international exhibition pavilions and working with international assistants. **>A4**

PRAYER
TIMINGS

Dhuhr.....	12:12pm
Asr.....	3:40pm
Maghrib.....	6:33pm
Isha.....	7:45pm
Fajr (Tomorrow).....	4:28am

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FOR 2025/2026

Registration opens for application for higher educational institutions

MUSCAT: The Higher Education Admission Centre at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation announced the opening of registration for applications to government higher education institutions, external and internal scholarships, and grants for undergraduate programmes for the 2025/2026 academic year.

The registration period begins today and will continue until 1 June 2025.



2024/2025 academic year

The Centre stated that students holding a General Education Diploma (GED) or its equivalent for the 2024/2025 academic year can register through the Centre's of-

ficial website (www.heac.gov.om). Applicants can explore available programs and specialisations of-

fered by higher education institutions and select the academic programs they want to apply for. -ONA

GLOBAL REPRESENTATION

Oman wins gold, two silver medals at Geneva exhibition

GENEVA: The Sultanate of Oman secured one gold and two silver medals at the conclusion of its participation in the 50th Geneva International Exhibition of Inventions 2025, which saw global representation from over 45 countries and more than 1,200 inventors and innovators.

Innovator Mu'ayid Samir Al Balushi claimed the gold medal for his invention "Etienne - SOS Rescue Device," a pioneering maritime safety device that sends distress signals to fishermen via satellite and radio waves.

Meanwhile, Mahmood Mohammed Al Hinai was awarded a silver medal for his "Air Conditioner Sterilization and Cleaning System," while Layyan Said Al Rahbi also received a silver medal for her invention "Lughia" (Language), designed to assist the deaf and mute in communicating with society.

Ibrahim Ahmed Al Balushi, Head of Oman's delegation at the



exhibition, emphasized that this marked the country's first participation under the auspices of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation.

He highlighted the ministry's commitment to supporting indi-

vidual innovations and providing real opportunities for Omani inventors to compete on international platforms, showcase their projects to investors and entrepreneurs, and connect with global innovators. -ONA

MEETING

CBO's board discusses global and regional affairs

MUSCAT: The Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Oman held on Sunday its second meeting for 2025, at CBO Headquarters, Muscat Governorate.

At the meeting, the Board approved CBO's closing accounts, the Banking Deposits Protection Scheme and Oman Credit and Financial Information Center (Mala'a) for 2024.

The Board also discussed the latest global and regional affairs, and is continuously assessing any potential impacts on the Sultanate of Oman.

Moreover, the Board reviewed a host of issues, notably the financial soundness indicators of banks, the position of reserves



and the performance of CBO's foreign investments, a report on "Prospects and Challenges of Financial Stability in the Omani Economy" for Q4 of 2024 and a report on newly licensed banks. The Board also took stock of a re-

port on SMEs for the period ending 31st December, 2024, a report on Omanization and succession in the banking sector and a report on the Omani Economic and Financial Experts Program.

In addition, the Board took stock of the Annual Report on Financial Technologies for 2024, the annual report of Oman Credit and Financial Information Center (Mala'a) and the semi-annual report on the activities of the Supreme Sharia Supervisory Board for the period from July to December, 2024.

Finally, the Board reviewed a number of studies and topics listed on the agenda, on which it took the appropriate decisions. -ONA

ECOSOC

Oman to take part in New York Youth Forum

NEW YORK: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth, will take part in ECOSOC Youth Forum 2025, due to be held in New York City, USA, during 14-17 April 2025.

The event is organised under the supervision of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

This year's forum, titled "Youth at the Forefront: Harnessing Science and Social Inclusion for Sustainable Development," aims to explore pathways for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in line with the UN's 2030 Agenda.

It will also highlight global experiences in key areas such as health, sustainable oceans, science and technology, and regional development.

The forum's sessions will focus on strengthening sustainable



economic growth and proposing recommendations to empower youth in actively shaping goals and priorities within sustainable development programs that align with their aspirations.

High-level discussions, led by young participants, will feature dialogues with heads of delegations, representatives of United Nations member states, and experts in global economic and social policy.

This marks Oman's third consecutive year of participation, underscoring the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Youth's commitment to engaging Omani youth and connecting them with their international peers.

The forum serves as a platform to empower youth and expose them to global best practices in comprehensive development and sustainable economic objectives. -ONA

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IOTC

Oman takes part in tuna commission meeting

RÉUNION: The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources, took part in the 29th session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), held on Réunion Island, France.

Oman's delegation was headed by Eng. Yaqoub Khalfan Al Busaidi, Undersecretary for Fisheries at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Water Resources.

The five-day meeting discusses key topics, including the sustainable development and management of tuna fisheries in member states, technical and scientific efforts to improve fishing efficiency, and the exchange of expertise among IOTC members. The session reviews future action plans and programs, along with recommendations and reports from specialised committees and working groups.

Oman joined the IOTC in 2000 and contributes to the organisation through participation in fisheries management, including meetings of the General Committee and Scientific Committee. It provides accurate data on catch volumes and fishing efforts, supporting assessments of tuna stocks. -ONA

GCC Secretary-General hails hosting of talks

Jasem Al-Budaiwi emphasised Oman's wise approach in promoting dialogue and building bridges of understanding between nations

RIYADH: Jasem Al-Budaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), has welcomed the Sultanate of Oman's hosting of talks between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United States of America.



He emphasised Oman's wise approach in promoting dialogue and building bridges of understanding between nations, as well as its steadfast commitment to supporting and enhancing security and stability in the region.

In a statement, stated that the GCC member states consistently seek, through their firm and solid relations with other nations, to find peaceful solutions to conflicts and present initiatives that serve the interests of the region's people and the world at large.

He added that the Council spares no effort in advancing regional and international peace and security.

Al-Budaiwi expressed hope that these constructive talks would yield positive results, paving the way for new avenues of cooperation between Iran and the US in a manner that enhances security and stability in the region. -**ONA**

HIGH-LEVEL TALKS

Iran Foreign Minister thanks Sultanate for mediation efforts

<FROM A1 The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan welcomed the Sultanate of Oman's hosting of high-level talks between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Jordan affirmed its support for diplomatic efforts aimed at resolving conflicts through dialogue and enhancing regional and international security and peace, while commending Oman's role in facilitating these talks, which contribute to achieving security and stability in the region.

Iranian Foreign Minister thanks Oman

Iranian Foreign Minister Dr. Abbas Araghchi extended his thanks to the Sultanate of Oman for hosting talks in Muscat, and for its mediation efforts between his country and the United States.



He stated, "We held a constructive and promising round of talks with US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff in an atmosphere of mutual respect, hosted and mediated by Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi."

He noted that both sides agreed to continue these efforts in the coming days. -**ONA**

TALKS

Sayyid Badr holds telephone conversation with GCC leaders

<FROM A1 During the call, the latest developments on the regional scene were discussed, particularly the talks hosted by the Sultanate of Oman between the United States of America (USA) and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed expressed the deep appreciation of the UAE for the positive role and wise endeavours undertaken by the Sultanate of Oman. He values its constructive efforts aimed at fostering a climate conducive to understanding and building confidence among the parties, in a way that enhances security and peace in the region and the world at large.

For his part, Sayyid Badr appreciated the UAE's keenness to support the conciliation and peace

efforts pursued by the Sultanate of Oman to strengthen the pillars of regional and global security, stability, and peace.

State of Kuwait

A phone call took place between Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Abdullah Ali Al-Yahya, Foreign Minister of the State of Kuwait.

The call addressed regional developments, including the US-Iran talks hosted in Muscat.

The Kuwaiti Foreign Minister expressed his appreciation for Oman's efforts in promoting dialogue, reaffirming Kuwait's support for endeavours aimed at achieving security and stability in the region.

Kingdom of Bahrain



Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi and Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain, held a telephone conversation.

The two sides discussed regional developments, includ-

ing the talks in Muscat between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Dr. Al Zayani expressed his appreciation for Oman's efforts in fostering a conducive environment for dialogue, voicing hope

that these efforts would contribute to enhancing security and stability in the region and the world.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and His Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, held a telephone conversation.

The two sides discussed developments in the talks between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran, held in Muscat.

The Saudi Foreign Minister expressed his appreciation for Oman's efforts in fostering an environment conducive to constructive dialogue, stressing the importance of these endeavors in

promoting security and stability in the region.

Jordan

Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, and Ayman Safadi, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan reviewed yesterday during a telephonic call the regional developments.

The two ministers discussed the talks held in Muscat between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Jordanian minister expressed Jordan's support for the Sultanate of Oman's efforts in furnishing a climate for dialogue. He lauded Oman's responsible role in bridging viewpoints and backing peaceful channels in a bid to solve regional disputes. -**ONA**

FOR 12TH EDITION

Applications open for research award

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation on Sunday announced the start of registration to the 12th National Award for Research. Application to the award will be open until 15 June 2025.

The National Award for Research reflects Oman's commitment to supporting scientists, researchers and innovators, and encouraging them to conduct sound scholarly research that provides solutions to national and global challenges.

The award seeks to honour the best research published in scholarly journals, develop competitive research cadres, raise awareness about scholarly research, support the publication of research in highly-rated scientific journals. -**ONA**

UNIQUE AND DISTINCTIVE EXPERIENCE

Large turnout of visitors at Oman's pavilion in Osaka

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka has begun welcoming visitors. The first day of the Expo witnessed a large turnout of officials, delegates from the participating countries, as well as Japanese and people of other nationalities.

The Sultanate of Oman pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka, Japan, offers a unique and distinctive experience that combines modern and interactive display technologies and enjoys natural elements through the pavilion's various sections.

Sajda bint Rashid Al Ghaithi, Director of the Sultanate of Oman Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka, explained that the team had prepared well to welcome visitors from the first day of the Expo.

She hoped that the visual and audio representation of Oman's cultural identity, investment op-

portunities, and tourism would contribute to achieving the objectives of the Sultanate of Oman's participation at Expo 2025 Osaka, Japan.

Al-Ghaithi said that visitors enter the pavilion at different intervals through the exhibition halls, divided into groups of 20 visitors each, with two groups gathered in the main exhibition hall, which can accommodate 40 visitors.

She noted that the pavilion includes three halls, two of which feature an introductory presentation that illustrates the interaction of water and land through rain and its reflection. It also depicts the wildlife or natural life in the Sultanate of Oman. Some of the wild animals in the Sultanate, such as the Arabian oryx, and deep-sea creatures, among other exhibits, are also displayed.

Al Ghaithi said that visitors then move to the main hall, where the



story of water, land, and humans is presented in an interactive manner, demonstrating how the daily lives of Omanis are in harmony with the land. The story of the irrigation system, represented by the aflaj, is also presented, highlighting human life from the past to the present, future aspirations, Oman

Vision 2040, and the Omani government's plans for sustainable development.

In this regard, she noted that these topics, related to the themes of Expo 2025, are presented through an engaging film, where visitors can see Omani faces and Omani dress.

Al Ghaithi explained that visitors move from the main hall to the Water and Fragrant Land Corridor, an area where they can smell the aromatic Omani scents, carefully selected in collaboration with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), through water bubbles using devices.

Sajida Al Ghaithi added that visitors then move to the Wadi area, which features a reflection of Omani mountains and waterfalls, which visitors can enjoy, especially with the presence of the shop and café.

She noted that there is a hall dedicated to introducing visitors to the pavilion's cultural identity and investment opportunities in various economic sectors related to economic diversification, in addition to showcasing the tourist attractions and landmarks for which the Sultanate of Oman's governors are famous.

EXPO OSAKA

'Osaka pavilion design is the result of collective efforts'

<FROM A1 International project management consultants were also brought in to help manage the project's complexities, ensure adherence to timelines and budgets, and communicate effectively with various stakeholders.

Ammar Al-Kiyumi emphasised that the design is the result of a collective effort, starting with developing the main concept, preparing detailed drawings, conducting research, developing the sustainability strategy, and developing the content concept.

He said: "We decided to seize the opportunity and participate in the special edition of the Bilal bin Haitham Architectural Design Competition to design the Omani pavilion at Expo Osaka, even though the initial submission deadline was only two weeks. We knew we needed a simple yet impactful design to catch the jury's attention, so we thought about how to align with the Expo's

theme, 'Sustainable Life,' while also highlighting what distinguishes the Sultanate of Oman from the rest of the world: its diverse environment."

The team also felt it necessary to propose a new sensory experience that departed from current trends that rely heavily on visually stimulating digital content. "We worked to create an immersive, comfortable, and tangible experience, rather than one that was solely digital. This resulted in an architectural form that provides a public space for people to interact with their surroundings. The focus was on presenting content in a contemporary and abstract manner, rather than a traditional descriptive or didactic approach," he added.

He noted that the design team worked closely with the contractor and specialised consultants to ensure consistency between the final product and the original design vision, while also developing smart solutions to overcome design chal-



lenges. He emphasised that the team responded quickly and intelligently to unexpected challenges.

He explained that it wasn't enough for the team to promote the idea of harmonious coexistence with nature; it was also necessary to create a space with a strong presence that would allow visitors to leave their work, put away their devices, and truly connect with the surrounding environment with all five of their senses.

Ammar Al Kiyumi emphasised that despite the strict laws and regulations imposed by the Expo administration in Osaka, the project was implemented smoothly and successfully. "We were ahead of schedule, and the Sultanate of Oman pavilion was among the first to begin construction and to complete it," he said.

The pavilion's architectural design was inspired by the natural diversity and varied terrain of the

Sultanate of Oman, and the way Omanis have adapted to this diversity, which has been reflected in the lives of local communities and the nature of local culture.

The Sultanate of Oman's pavilion includes three main sections: an outdoor space designed for relaxation, seating, play, and gatherings, enabling visitors to interact directly and sensually with the architectural components of this space, inspired by the diverse terrain of the Sultanate of Oman.

The pavilion is centered on a two-and-a-half-metre-wide corridor and a glass roof that allows light to enter the pavilion in an innovative way.

Through this, a "water trough" is added to the design, allowing visitors to pass through the corridor and move between the interior exhibition spaces. The pavilion's interior includes the exhibition, which represents the displayed content and the narrative of the visitor experience, an information

center, meeting rooms, and a VIP lounge. The main drivers of the Sultanate's pavilion at Expo 2025 are: land, water, and people.

The main message of the Sultanate of Oman Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka, under the theme "Sultanate of Oman - Extending Connections," aligns with the overall messages presented by Expo 2025 Osaka and reflects the local lifestyle in the Sultanate of Oman, which relies primarily on human interaction with others.

Throughout the ages, the Sultanate of Oman has served as a link between the three continents of the world. It has not only exchanged goods and ships with them, but has also exported cultures, civilizations, and arts whose historical ties and journeys have extended to various parts of the world from the past to the present day.

It has established architectural connections and details that are in harmony with the environment and place.



Forum focuses on GCC investment integration

The meeting, hosted by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, brought together representatives from all GCC member states and the General Secretariat

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Ibtisam bint Ahmed Al-Farooji, Undersecretary for Investment Promotion at the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and



Investment Promotion, led the Sultanate of Oman's delegation at the third meeting of the GCC Investment Authorities Undersecretaries Committee, held in Kuwait City. The meeting, hosted by the Kuwait Direct Investment Promotion Authority, brought together repre-

sentatives from all Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states and the General Secretariat. The gathering aimed to bolster economic integration among Gulf countries, aligning with directives from GCC leadership to enhance cooperation in direct investment. Discussions centred on harmonis-

ing investment policies, enhancing transparency, and fostering a competitive environment to attract sustainable foreign investments. Chairman of the Committee, Sheikh Abdullah Sabah Al-Hamoud Al-Sabah, emphasised the need for innovative measures to address rapid global economic changes, including the development of regulatory frameworks to improve regional and global competitiveness. Assistant Secretary-General for Economic and Development Affairs at the GCC General Secretariat, Khalid Al-Sunaidi, expressed gratitude to Kuwait for hosting the meeting and underscored the importance of coordinated efforts to maximise the region's investment potential and achieve economic diversification. Oman's participation reflects its dedication to fostering a unified Gulf investment strategy, aiming to create a more attractive and efficient investment landscape across the GCC.

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Oman, UK review bilateral relations

MUSCAT: The 16th session meeting of the Oman-UK Working Group was held in Muscat on Sunday. The Omani side was headed by Sheikh Khalifa Ali Al Harthy, Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Political Affairs, while the British side was headed by Hamish Falconer, Minister of State for the Middle East. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed aspects of bilateral relations and explored means of boosting them to achieve desired objectives. Both sides discussed areas of joint cooperation in the cultural,

tourism, educational, vocational training, environmental and renewable energy fields. They also exchanged views on regional and international developments. The meeting was attended by Munthir Mahfoudh Al Manthiri, Head of the Europe Department at the Foreign Ministry, Abdullah Hamad Al Riami, Head of the Cultural Cooperation Department at the Foreign Ministry, Dr. Liane Saunders, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the Sultanate of Oman and several representatives of concerned government units.

— ONA

FIRST ROUND OF TALKS

Arab Parliament hails Oman's hosting of US-Iran negotiations

CAIRO: The Arab Parliament has welcomed the Sultanate of Oman's hosting of the first round of direct negotiations between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran, expressing hope that these talks would contribute to enhancing regional and global security and stability. The Arab Parliament praised Oman's pivotal role and sincere efforts in hosting these discussions, which reflect its enduring commitment to supporting initiatives that promote peace and stability.

It added that Oman's hosting of these talks aligns with its broader support for all efforts aimed at de-escalating tensions in the region and maintaining international security and peace. The Arab Parliament affirmed its full support for diplomatic solutions to crises and conflicts at all regional and international levels, stressing that fostering direct dialogue is the optimal path to achieving lasting settlements for all disputes. It also endorsed joint international efforts to enhance security and peace both regionally and globally. — ONA



THREE-DAY EVENT



First Hajj, Umrah exhibition kicks off at Muscat's OCEC

MUSCAT: The inaugural Hajj and Umrah Exhibition, organised by the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, began on Sunday at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC). The three-day event brings together key stakeholders, including government entities, private sector representatives, and Hajj and Umrah service providers. The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of Sheikh Al Fadl Mohammed Al Harthy, Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers. The exhibition aims to strengthen partnerships among Hajj and Umrah stakeholders in Oman by providing a unified platform for collaboration. It seeks to enhance competition among service providers for pilgrims,



foster innovation in delivering high-quality services, and simplify access to information, enabling pilgrims to make well-informed choices. Additionally, the event promotes cultural, historical, legal, and scientific enrichment through diverse programs. A series of accompanying

events will take place on the sidelines, including lectures on Hajj rituals, spiritual aspects, and objectives, as well as a training workshop for Hajj companies titled "Welcome." An introductory session on regulations and services for pilgrims will also be featured. — ONA

DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION

India test fires laser weapon that can shoot down aerial threats

KURNOOL: In a major success for the country, India on Sunday joined the select League of Nations, including the US, China and Russia, with the capability of shooting down fixed-wing drones and swarm drones using a high-energy 30-kilowatt laser beam. The successful trial of the Mk-II(A) Laser-Directed Energy Weapon (DEW) system was showcased at the National Open Air Range (NOAR), Kurnool, mastering the technology of disabling missiles, drones and smaller projectiles, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) officials told ANI here. Success has put India in the exclusive and limited club of nations that possess the high-power Laser-DEW. Speaking with ANI, DRDO Chairman Samir V Kamat said, "As far as I know, it is the United States, Russia and China that have demonstrated this capability. Israel is also working on similar capabilities, I would say we are the fourth or fifth country in the world to demonstrate this system." Kamat said that this is just the "beginning of the journey", adding that DRDO is working on a number of technologies "that will give us Star Wars capability." "This is just the beginning of the journey. The synergy that this lab has achieved with other DRDO labs, industry and academia, I am sure we will reach our destination soon... We are also working



on other high energy systems like high energy microwaves, electromagnetic pulse. So we are working on a number of technologies that will give us Star Wars capability. What you saw today was one of the components of Star Wars technologies," Kamat said. Indigenously designed and developed Mk-II(A) DEW system was demonstrated in its entire spectrum of capability by engaging the fixed-wing drones at long range, thwarting a multiple drone attack and destroying enemy surveillance sensors and antennae. The lightning speed of engagement, the precision and the lethality delivered to the target within few seconds made it the most potent Counter Drone System.

DRDO's Centre for High Energy Systems and Sciences (CHESS), Hyderabad, developed the system along with LRDE, IRDE, DLRL and academic institutions and Indian industries. Once detected by a radar or by its inbuilt Electro Optic (EO) system, laser-DEW can engage targets at the speed of light and use an intense beam of powerful light (Laser Beam) to cut through the target, leading to structural failure or more impactful results if the warhead is targeted. This type of cutting-edge weaponry has the potential to revolutionize the battlespace by reducing the reliance on expensive ammunition while also lowering the risk of collateral damage. — ANI

DESTABILISING THE COUNTRY



Serbia’s president calls for ‘order’ after student protests

BELGRADE: Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic on Saturday called for “order and peace” to be restored to the Balkan country, which has been rocked by months of large anti-corruption protests.

Addressing a crowd of thousands of right-wing and nationalist supporters in Belgrade, Vucic said the student-led protesters had “inflicted huge evil on Serbia in the past five months.”

The right-wing populist also repeated claims that the movement to oust him was being led by unnamed foreign actors.

“The attack came from abroad,” Vucic told the crowd in the Serbian capital, many of whom were bussed in from across Serbia, as well as neighbouring Kosovo and Bosnia.

“We will not allow those from outside and inside Serbia to destroy our state,” he said.

Why was the nationalist rally being held?

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban addressed the rally through a video message, telling the crowd that “foreign powers want to tell Serbs how to live.”

Bosnian Serb President Milorad Dodik, who is wanted by Bosnia’s authorities over his separatist policies, also spoke to the crowd.

He said that Vucic “is today the only man who can hold together a strong and powerful Serbia, both in domestic and foreign policy... especially in these very unstable times.”

The rally was called to counter



recent massive demonstrations that have swept the country since November, when a train station canopy collapsed in Novi Sad, killing 16 people.

The accident has been widely blamed on corruption and shoddy renovation works.

On March 15, between 275,000 and 325,000 people turned out in Belgrade in one of the largest protests in Serbia’s history.

What else did Vucic say during the rally?

Vucic has accused the protesters of destabilising the country and of receiving payments from “foreign intelligence agencies.”

During his speech on Saturday evening, the Serbian president said “certain foreign powers cannot bear to see a free, independent and sovereign Serbia.”

Vucic also announced a new political movement that he said would “bring new energy” to the Balkan nation.

“Each worker, each farmer is welcome; each person who earns an honest living, and fights for his children and his country, is welcome,” he said. — **DW**

Many Palestinians killed, injured in ongoing Israeli attacks across Gaza Strip

The ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza since October 2023 has so far resulted in at least 50,933 documented Palestinian fatalities, with over 116,045 others injured

GAZA: Several Palestinians were killed and others injured on Sunday morning as Israeli airstrikes continued to pound various areas of the Gaza Strip, according to local and medical sources.

In the central Gaza Strip, seven Palestinians were killed when an Israeli airstrike targeted a civilian vehicle on Al-Rashid Street in Deir al-Balah.

In Jabalia al-Balad area, located in the northern part of the Strip, a woman was killed in an Israeli drone strike which targeted a group of civilians, witnesses reported.

Further casualties were reported following Israeli airstrikes on two schools sheltering displaced families — Saad Bin Muadh School in the Al-Tuffah neighborhood and Al-Dahyan School in Sheikh Radwan. Both schools were housing displaced families.

The ongoing Israeli aggression on Gaza since October 2023 has so far resulted in at least 50,933 documented Palestinian fatalities, with over 116,045 others injured.

Thousands of victims are feared trapped under rubble, inaccessible to emergency and civil defense teams due to Israeli attacks.

Israel’s genocidal attacks continue unabated despite calls from the UN Security Council for an immediate ceasefire and directives from the International Court of Justice urging measures to prevent genocide and alleviate



the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Israeli airstrike destroys emergency building of Gaza’s Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital

In the early hours of Sunday morning, Israeli warplanes bombed the reception and emergency departments of Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza City, rendering the facility completely out of service.

According to local sources, two missiles struck the hospital’s main reception building, causing massive destruction and sparking fires in critical departments including emergency care, the laboratory, and the pharmacy.

Eyewitnesses reported that the Israeli military had issued a direct threat to bomb the hospital shortly before the strike, giving patients,

wounded individuals, and medical staff just 18 minutes to evacuate.

The forced eviction left many patients with no access to urgent care, as dozens were seen lying in the streets surrounding the hospital amid freezing weather conditions.

Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital was a vital healthcare center serving over one million residents in Gaza City and the North Gaza district. Its destruction marks a severe blow to Gaza’s already collapsing health system, which has been under relentless pressure since the outbreak of the ongoing Israeli genocide on October 7, 2023.

Since the start of the aggression, 34 hospitals across Gaza have been destroyed and forced out of service, in addition to dozens of health centers and clinics. These Israeli attacks, rights groups ar-

gue, constitute clear violations of international law, particularly the Geneva Conventions which protect medical institutions during conflict.

Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital had previously been the site of a devastating massacre on October 17, 2023, when a horrific Israeli airstrike killed 471 civilians, including patients and displaced families sheltering in the hospital.

Located on the northern edge of the Al-Zaytoun neighborhood in Gaza City, Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital is managed by the Anglican Episcopal Church in Jerusalem. It is one of the oldest medical facilities in Gaza, having been established in 1882.

Five killed, others injured in Israeli airstrike on home in Jabalia

Five Palestinians were killed and several others injured this afternoon after Israeli warplanes bombed a residential home in the Al-Jurn neighborhood in the town of Jabalia, in northern Gaza, according to medical sources.

Wafa correspondent reported that the airstrike targeted the home of the Manoun family, resulting in multiple casualties.

In a separate development, Israeli forces carried out demolitions of homes in the eastern areas of Al-Shuja’iya neighborhood, east of Gaza City. — **Wafa**

HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS

Housing crisis: Germany plans ‘turbo’ construction boost

BERLIN: Once a military parade ground for the Prussian army and later famously the base for the Berlin Airlift, Tempelhofer Feld, as it is now officially called, opened to the public as a recreational area in 2010. Stretching out over more than 300 hectares, it is one of the largest green urban spaces in world and a favourite for locals and tourists alike.

Now, once discarded plans to build here are gaining new momentum.

The Berlin government would like to see the construction of numerous five to ten-storey buildings and several individual high-rise buildings, shrinking the central inner meadow area from 305 to to 180 hectares. Fifty percent of the built-up area would become commercial space.

Plans to develop the former airfield were scuppered by a locally-organised referendum in 2014. However, incoming chancellor Friedrich Merz, of the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU), spoke out in the run-up to the federal elections in February suggesting politicians must be prepared to build on the land even if it is against the will of local residents.

The lack of affordable housing and skyrocketing rents in Germany has become perhaps the most pressing social issue of the century. There is a shortage of over 800,00 apartments, according to the Federal Statistical Office, and the median monthly asking rent in Berlin has risen by 85.2% from €8.50 per square meter in 2015 to €15.74 in 2024.

To tackle the problem, Germany’s incoming coalition government of the Christian Democrats and Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) and the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) has announced plans to turbo-charge housing construction (“Wohnungsbau-Turbo”), slash bureaucracy, cut taxes



and provide funding programs for construction and modernisation.

The plans were quickly welcomed as “a huge step forward” by the Federal Association of German Housing and Real Estate Companies (GdW). The construction industry interest group pointed in particular to “simplifications” of planning, procurement and environment law, as well as a proposed housing construction investment fund.

Berlin still looking for a way out of the housing crisis

Berlin’s Senate Department for Urban Development, Building and Housing estimates that over 100,000 new apartments are needed to ease the overheated market as it stands today. Around 200,000 people are expected to move to Berlin by 2040, meaning the city needs to build an average of 20,000 new apartments a year to meet the expected demand.

However, its latest statistics show a decline in construction activity in 2023 where just 15,965 apartments were completed — attributed to poor economic conditions and rising interest rates.

Attempts to ease the housing crisis, from rent control to stricter tenancy laws, to attempts to crack down on speculators leaving properties empty or only rent-

ing out short-term fully-furnished apartments, have all failed, says Christian Müller, chairman of the Association of Architects and Engineers of Berlin-Brandenburg (AIV).

Centrally located and well connected, Müller is in favor of a well-designed development on the edge of Tempelhofer Feld as a compromise between the various interest groups — also because the site is publicly owned and therefore significantly cheaper for developers. “It is important that fairly priced apartments are built there. It should be a good mix. The state-owned housing associations must be involved and we must maintain diversity,” Müller told DW.

While he admits that Tempelhofer Feld has been extremely well received by local residents, like state and federal politicians, he says the housing situation has changed dramatically. “90% of Berliners want everything to stay as it is. Until they receive notice to vacate and have to look for an apartment themselves on the housing market,” Müller says, adding that housing for 100,000 people could be created on the entire area without it being too cramped.

Little trust in the promise of affordable homes

Part nature reserve, part leisure

park, Tempelhofer Feld is now home to numerous community projects from an experimental space for sustainable architecture to artist-run spaces, a bicycle repair workshop and a chess clubhouse. It’s also a nesting site for several of Germany’s endangered bird species, among them skylarks, and a herd of Skudden sheep, an endangered breed, have been relocated here to help promote biodiversity.

“The Feld is unique. It only works as a whole — take away even a part of it, and you destroy its entire value,” says Anita Möller, a member of the citizens’ action group “100% Tempelhofer Feld,” which organized the referendum that stopped the site being developed back in 2014.

Looking out over the community gardens that have sprung up on Tempelhofer Feld where green-fingered residents grow flowers and vegetables, Möller points to a 2021 study by the Berlin Senate’s own Environment Department that emphasized the unique character of the urban space with its mixture of large nature conservation and recreational areas.

The study also highlighted its ecological importance in terms of maintaining biodiversity, improving air quality and cooling the densely populated surround-



ing neighbourhoods. Back in 2014, around two-thirds of voters (64.3%) decided in favor of protecting the space from development and the resulting preservation act prohibits the building or expansion of existing buildings on the site.

Now Berlin’s CDU-SPD coalition government — which came to power in a 2023 election where 39% of voters cited housing as the single most important issue ahead of any other — is once again exploring plans to build there. It’s 2023 coalition agreement states that “deviations” from previous commitments to not sell state-owned land “may be permitted in individual cases for housing cooperatives oriented towards the common good.”

And they have already launched a series of public consultations and an international urban-planning competition for ideas on how best to develop the former airfield.

For now, the suggestion is to only build on the periphery — Berlin’s mayor Kai Wegner (CDU) told the *Tagesspiegel* newspaper in November 2024 it would be possible to build 15,000 to 20,000 apartments on the edges — but there’s fierce opposition even to that.

Berlin’s opposition Green and Left parties accuse the CDU-SPD coalition of wasting millions of

taxpayer’s money on public consultations and urban planning competitions in a bid to sway public opinion in favor of building apartments that in reality only a tiny proportion of residents could afford.

“They keep claiming it’s about housing needs, but let’s be honest: it’s about money, speculation and investor dreams. If it were really about solving the housing crisis, we have better options,” Möller says, referencing the government’s City Development Plan 2040 that identifies other sites where up to 222,000 homes could be built.

The idea that the path to more affordable homes requires more construction is outdated, according to Möller, who believes that the government needs to invest in new kinds of “democratic and sustainable” urban development that “respects our environmental limits and the value of open space.”

For now, at least the area is protected by the Tempelhofer Feld Preservation Act introduced after the referendum in 2014. But as Möller points out, that could easily be overturned by a majority vote in the Berlin Senate.

“Affordable housing has failed elsewhere. Why should we believe it will suddenly work here? Once it’s built on, it’s lost forever,” she says. — **DW**

SPORTS

IPL

Kohli, Salt's fifties power RCB to 9-wicket victory



JAIPUR [INDIA]: Virat Kohli and Phil Salt's fifties powered Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) to a dominating nine-wicket victory against Rajasthan Royals (RR) in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season on Sunday at Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) skipper Rajat won the toss and opted to bowl first against RR. Kohli and Salt opened the RCB innings, and Salt again gave Bengaluru an aggressive start, smashing all bowlers in the powerplay. Virat Kohli smartly rotated the strike and gave it to Salt. RCB finished their power play on 65/0, Phil Salt 46 (23) and Virat Kohli 18 (13). Phil Salt brought up his fifty in the 8th over, and he kept smashing RR bowlers even after the field restrictions.

Kumar Kartikeya removed Phil Salt in the 9th over for 65 (33). His innings included five fours and six sixes. Devdutt Padikkal joined Virat Kohli in the middle. After 10 overs, RCB were way ahead in the game at 101/1: Virat Kohli 27 and Padikkal 6.

Salt counter-attacked RR bowlers before getting out, which gave RCB batters the freedom to take their time on the crease and play accordingly. Virat Kohli played anchoring innings, taking singles and doubles at regular intervals.

RR bowlers looked clueless in front of RCB batters. Virat Kohli brought up his fifty with a straight six to Wanindu Hasaranga in the 15th over. His third in this edition of IPL and 100th overall in T20 internationals.

Padikkal charged on Tushar Deshpande in the 16th over, hitting him for 13 runs with a four and six each. RR dropped four catches in the second innings and was very sloppy on the field.

On a slow track where RR batters struggled to hit boundaries at regular intervals, RCB's run rate did not come down under 10. Padikkal opened his arms and scored quickly after the 15th over.

Virat Kohli 62 (45) and Devdutt Padikkal 40 (28) helped RCB chase a difficult target of 174 in the 18th over. The duo added 83 runs for the second wicket.

In bowling, only Kumar Kartikeya (1/25) took a wicket, rest all the RR bowlers took a hammering from the RCB batters.

Yashasvi Jaiswal's outstanding 75 and Dhruv Jurel's crucial 35 powered the Rajasthan Royals to 173/4 in their 20-overs clash.

Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sanju Samson opened the innings for RR, Yashasvi Jaiswal played the power-play well but RR skipper Sanju Samson found it very difficult to score, he got out in the 7th over of the innings, getting trapped by Krunal Pandya for 15 (19).

Sanju struggled to score runs which led RR to finish their power-play on 45/0. Riyan Parag joined Jaiswal in the middle, and as the partnership was building between Parag and Jaiswal, Yash Dayal dropped a sitter catch of Riyan Parag on Suyash Sharma's bowling in the 10th over.

In the halfway stage RR made 77/1. Parag and Jaiswal played well after the power-play. They consistently rotated the strike and kept scoring boundaries in every over, Jaiswal bought up his fifty in the 13th over, his second in the IPL 2025. **ANI**

Al Zubair flies Omani flag high with podium finish at Paul Ricard

The Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT trio used the free practice session on Friday morning to shakedown the BMW with Klingmann setting the best lap of 1min 54.889sec in dry conditions



PAUL RICARD (FRANCE): Al Faisal Al Zubair made a strong start to the 2025 GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup powered by AWS, proudly raising the Omani flag on the podium after securing third place in the Gold Cup category and an impressive 10th overall at the six-hour season opener at Paul Ricard. Racing with Al Manar Racing by Team WRT, Al Faisal, alongside teammates Jens Klingmann and Ben Tuck, delivered a standout performance that sets the tone for a strong season ahead.

After qualifying their BMW M4 GT3 EVO in sixth place, the trio gradually moved through the field and looked set to finish second until Verstappen.com Racing's Harry King made a late pass on the BMW and snatched the runner-up spot behind the triumphant CSA Racing McLaren of Arthur Rougier, James Kell and Simon Gachet.

Al-Zubair said: "I'm proud to raise Oman's flag on the podium again. I think finishing 10th overall and third in class on our first time together in GT World Challenge Europe is something we should be proud of. I am happy with how the car performed. We struggled



quite a bit in qualifying, but making it into the top 10 and being the third BMW to finish is great. It's a good sign for the rest of the season. Thanks to the team!"

The Garage 59 McLaren hit the front of the overall race heading into the second hour and Ben Tuck retained sixth place and was running around a lap behind the leading driver Dean McDonald.

Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT climbed to fifth soon after and maintained fifth through the 2.5-hour mark. The Garage 59 McLaren continued to lead the

Gold Cup category into three and a half hours of the race, but had slipped to fourth in the overall classification, as the Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT BMW remained in fifth.

The leading McLaren hit trouble in the next segment and, with 90 minutes of the race to run, the CSA Racing McLaren led the Gold Cup category and canny strategies had seen Tuck, Klingmann and Al-Zubair climb to second place.

With 30 minutes of the race remaining, Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT retained second place

only to be overtaken late on by the Verstappen.com Racing Aston Martin Vantage AMR GT3 EVO.

The Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT trio used the free practice session on Friday morning to shakedown the BMW with Klingmann setting the best lap of 1min 54.889sec in dry conditions. That put the team just 0.470 seconds off the fastest Gold Cup lap time set by the Garage 59 McLaren.

After a short pre-qualifying session on Friday evening, attention turned to the all-important qualifying stints on Saturday morning.

With the three qualifying sessions combined, pole position in the Gold Cup category went to Adam Smalley, Dean McDonald and Louise Prette in the Garage 69 McLaren with an average qualifying lap of 1min 54.102sec. Al-Zubair, Klingmann and Tuck qualified the BMW M4 in sixth place with a best average time of 1min 54.682sec, their best tour of 1min 54.110sec coming in Q3.

Al-Manar Racing by Team WRT now switches its attention to the opening round of the Sprint series at Brands Hatch in England on May 3rd-4th.



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OQ'S STRONG 2024 RESULT
OQ announced a net profit of OMR 1.2 billion (USD 3 billion) in its 2024 standalone financials, attributed to strong overall business performance and strategic divestments of certain assets.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS HIGHER
The MSX index closed at 4,275.97 points, up by 0.13% from previous close. The Shariah Index ended up by 0.79% at 381.61 points. Al Maha Ceramics, up 9.17%, was the top gainer while, Oman Fisheries, down 6.67%, was the top loser.

Oman’s production of gasoline rises by 0.9%

Statistics revealed that the production of regular motor fuel (M-91) reached approximately 2,693 million barrels by the end of February 2025



MUSCAT: The Sultanate of Oman's production of gasoline recorded a rise of 0.9% at the end of February 2025 compared to February 2024, while the total production of refineries recorded a decline by 2.6% compared to the same period in February 2024, according to preliminary statistics released by the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSD).

Statistics revealed that the production of regular motor fuel (M-91) reached approximately 2,693 million barrels by the end of February 2025, compared to 2,386 thousand barrels by the end of February 2024, marking a 12.9% increase. Its sales amounted to 2,255.4 thousand barrels by the end of February 2025, compared to 2,232.9 thousand barrels in the same period of 2024, reflecting a 1% increase.

On the other hand, the production of premium motor fuel (M-95) declined by 12% by the end of February 2025, reaching approxi-

mately 1,949.5 thousand barrels, compared to 2,215.3 thousand barrels during the same period in 2024. Despite this drop in production, the sales of premium fuel (M-95) increased by 3.3%, amounting to 2,115 thousand barrels, up from 2,047.7 thousand barrels at the end of February last year.

Diesel (gas oil) production saw a slight decline of 0.5%, reaching 4,529.8 thousand barrels by the end of February 2025, compared to 4,551.6 thousand barrels during the same period in 2024.

In contrast, diesel sales increased by 1.5%, reaching 2,292.7 thousand barrels, up from 2,258.6 million barrels by the end of February last year.

As for aviation fuel oil, production declined by 13% by the end of February 2025, reaching 1,866 million barrels compared to 2,144.6 thousand barrels in the same period of 2024. Sales also dropped by 13.7%, totaling 641.4 thousand bar-

rels by the end of February 2025, compared to 742.9 thousand barrels in the same period last year.

Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) production reached 1,123.1 thousand barrels by the end of February 2025, reflecting a 5.8% decrease from the same period in 2024, when production stood at 1,192.6 thousand barrels. However, its sales rose to 629.1 thousand barrels, up from 537.5 thousand barrels, marking a 17% increase.

Regarding petrochemicals, statistics showed a slight increase of 1.1% in benzene production, reaching 28.7 thousand metric tons by the end of February 2025 compared to 28.4 thousand metric tons in the same period of 2024. Meanwhile, paraxylene production dropped by 10.7%, reaching 89.4 thousand metric tons compared to 100.1 thousand metric tons at the end of February last year. Polypropylene production also declined by 6.5%, recording 54.5 thousand

metric tons, down from 58.3 thousand metric tons during the same period in 2024. Despite the decrease in production, polypropylene sales recorded a significant increase of 88.3%, reaching 3.6 thousand metric tons, compared to 1.9 thousand metric tons by the end of February last year.

Oman's exports of regular motor fuel (M-91) dropped by 50.1% by the end of February 2025, reaching 251.8 thousand barrels, compared to 504.3 thousand barrels in the same period of 2024. In contrast, premium motor fuel (M-95) exports rose significantly by 102.4%, reaching 560.4 thousand barrels. Diesel exports declined by 52%, recording 1,019.2 thousand barrels compared to 2,121.8 thousand barrels in the same period last year. Jet fuel exports also dropped by 16.9%, from 1,338.4 million barrels at the end of February 2024 to 1,112 thousand barrels at the end of February 2025.

As for LPG, exports saw a sharp decline of 82%, reaching 26.6 thousand barrels by the end of February 2025, compared to 147.6 thousand barrels at the end of February 2024.

In the petrochemicals sector, benzene exports recorded a slight increase of 0.6%, reaching 25.3 thousand metric tons by the end of February 2025, compared to 25.2 thousand metric tons in the same period of 2024. Paraxylene exports rose by 10.9%, reaching 113.6 thousand metric tons compared to 102.4 thousand metric tons by the end of last February. Polypropylene exports also increased by 11%, reaching 39.2 thousand metric tons, compared to 35.3 thousand metric tons during the same period in 2024. -ONA

INVESTMENTS



Usufruct contracts worth OMR1.8mn signed for livestock, agricultural projects

MUSCAT: Acting in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning signed 11 usufruct contracts for implementing agricultural and livestock projects with investments exceeding OMR 1.8 million.

The projects cover an area of 800 acres in different governorates of Oman. The step reflects the country's strategic direction to enhance food security and achieve self-sufficiency.

The contracts seek to enable investors to establish quality projects that contribute to enhancing local crop and animal production, improving the efficiency of agricultural land use, and employing modern production technologies. This will contribute to supporting food supply chains and providing promising

The projects cover an area of 800 acres in different governorates of Oman

economic opportunities in the targeted areas.

The projects will be established in the governorates of North Al Batinah, South Al Batinah, North A'Sharqiyah, A'Dakhiliyah and Musandam.

The contracts were signed at the presence of Eng. Hamad Ali Al Nazwani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning for Housing and Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al Bakri, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources for Agriculture. -ONA

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MARKET

MSX index ends higher

Al Maha Ceramics, up 9.17%, was the top gainer while, Oman Fisheries, down 6.67%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,275.97 points, up by 0.13% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.79% at 381.61 points. Al Maha Ceramics, up 9.17%, was the top gainer while, Oman Fisheries, down 6.67%, was the top loser. Shares of Bank Nizwa were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while OQEP were the most active in terms of turnover. A total number of 1169 trades

were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 5.61 million, with more than 34 million shares changing hands. Out of 56 traded securities, 20 advanced, 18 declined, and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 226K while domestic investors were net sellers for RO 222K, followed by foreign investors for RO 4K worth of shares. — United Securities

MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,285.25	4,265.61	4,275.97	4,270.39	5.59	0.13
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,564.55	7,509.22	7,517.66	7,549.90	-32.24	-0.43
Industry Index	5,547.74	5,489.62	5,508.66	5,528.91	-20.25	-0.37
Services Index	1,541.24	1,533.56	1,539.46	1,533.56	5.89	0.38
MSX Shariah Index	382.00	377.37	381.61	378.62	2.99	0.79
MSX TR INDEX	6,326.84	6,305.20	6,320.53	6,312.27	8.26	0.13
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,964.94	8,899.37	8,909.37	8,947.57	-38.21	-0.43
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,817.34	6,745.92	6,769.32	6,794.20	-24.88	-0.37
SERVICES TR IDX	1,959.73	1,949.98	1,957.47	1,949.98	7.49	0.38
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	Turnover	Trades	Market Cap.	Up	Down	Equal	Sec. Traded
34,000,054	5,608,388	1,169	27,206,501,218	20	18	18	56

SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 13

SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF. RD	DIFF. %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PREV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET															
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	229,232	15,045	22	0.065	0.068	0.065	0.068	0.064	0.004	6.250	0.068	0.066	0.068	8,287,500
OM0000003398	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	4,423,563	587,146	107	0.132	0.134	0.131	0.133	0.131	0.002	1,527	0.134	0.127	0.134	880,093,754
OM0000004788	MADINA TAKAFUL	7,840	604	2	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.077	0.076	0.001	1,316	0.077	0.075	0.077	13,475,000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	190,000	15,200	10	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.080	0.079	0.001	1,286	0.080	0.080	0.080	16,000,000
OM0000005868	OQREDOO	8,053	8,811	18	0.174	0.174	0.171	0.172	0.170	0.002	1,176	0.172	0.171	0.172	11,962,408
OM0000004735	SEMBOCORP SALALAH	14,000	1,302	2	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.093	0.092	0.001	1,087	0.093	0.095	0.100	88,775,191
OM0000003254	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	91,933	29,007	8	0.315	0.317	0.314	0.317	0.314	0.003	9,955	0.317	0.305	0.317	74,941,970
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	3,150,456	791,395	74	0.250	0.252	0.250	0.252	0.250	0.002	8,800	0.252	0.252	0.100	1,891,613,060
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	2,450,862	316,047	113	0.128	0.130	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.001	0,781	0.129	0.129	0.129	558,650,486
OM0000002804	ASAFFA FOODS	4,564	1,734	5	0.379	0.380	0.379	0.380	0.379	0.001	0,264	0.380	0.372	0.380	45,600,000
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	3,575,352	1,001,099	6	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.280	0.000	0,000	0.280	0.278	0.280	455,264,979
OM0000002168	ALANWAR CERAMIC	116,121	13,219	17	0.112	0.120	0.112	0.118	0.118	0.000	0,000	0.118	0.113	0.117	23,960,000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	928	52	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.000	0,000	0.056	0.056	0.060	19,943,129
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	76,886	5,262	12	0.069	0.069	0.068	0.069	0.069	0.000	0,000	0.069	0.068	0.069	46,567,233
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	105,988	7,060	11	0.067	0.067	0.066	0.066	0.066	0.000	0,000	0.067	0.066	0.067	47,150,818
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	590,813	127,056	48	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.216	0.000	0,000	0.216	0.215	0.216	166,363,200
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	82,050	66,462	13	0.811	0.811	0.810	0.811	0.811	-0.001	-0.123	0.811	0.810	0.811	607,500,000
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	4,999	1,972	13	0.394	0.396	0.394	0.396	0.394	-0.001	-0.254	0.393	0.385	0.390	130,032,975
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	52,554	11,749	17	0.228	0.228	0.218	0.222	0.225	-0.003	-1.333	0.222	0.222	0.247	207,727,974
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	52,773	5,933	7	0.114	0.114	0.111	0.111	0.113	-0.002	-1.770	0.111	0.111	0.114	16,650,000
OM0000001087	OMAN UNITED INSURANCE	43,668	9,094	5	0.206	0.209	0.206	0.209	0.214	-0.005	-2.336	0.209	0.209	0.214	20,900,000
Total		15,315,916	3,015,290	511											

Parallel Market

OM0000006005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	200	26	1	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.131	0.120	0.011	9,167	0.131	0.118	0.131	7,205,000
OM0000008710	BANKA DESALINATION	12,200	1,562	2	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.128	0.123	0.005	4,065	0.128	0.121	0.132	9,696,816
OM0000004248	SMN POWER HOLDING	4,530	985	8	0.217	0.219	0.217	0.218	0.214	0.004	1,869	0.218	0.215	0.218	10,445,561
OM0000007407	DHOFAH GENERATING	10,000	560	1	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.056	0.055	0.001	1,818	0.056	0.054	0.060	10,445,440
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	86,000	9,908	7	0.115	0.117	0.115	0.117	0.115	0.002	1,738	0.117	0.115	0.117	71,150,805
OM0000002236	AL AZEERA SERVICES	8,248	1,242	5	0.148	0.152	0.148	0.152	0.150	0.002	1,333	0.152	0.152	0.152	6,512,135
OM0000009908	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SF2)	670,250	67,031	65	0.100	0.101	0.099	0.101	0.100	0.001	1,000	0.101	0.101	0.101	348,408,576
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	37,217	14,132	12	0.378	0.380	0.378	0.380	0.378	0.002	0,529	0.380	0.380	0.380	62,842,500
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	215,050	11,398	7	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.053	0.000	0,000	0.053	0.053	0.100	4,500,000
OM0000002267	GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS	24,255	5,401	6	0.222	0.223	0.220	0.220	0.220	0.000	0,000	0.220	0.222	0.223	10,068,476
OM0000002572	OMAN OIL MARKETING	150	109	1	0.725	0.725	0.725	0.725	0.725	0.000	0,000	0.725	0.680	0.755	44,424,375
OM0000003000	ALMAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING	250	255	1	1.020	1.020	1.020	1.020	1.020	0.000	0,000	1.020	1.020	1.020	70,380,000
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	68,395	40,373	9	0.590	0.591	0.590	0.590	0.590	0.000	0,000	0.590	0.590	0.590	55,231,766
OM0000005963	PHOENIX POWER	174	11	1	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.000	0,000	0.061	0.060	0.062	89,218,689
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	21,349	1,388	6	0.066	0.066	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.000	0,000	0.065	0.064	0.065	10,110,776
OM0000008868	THE PEARL REIF	4,050	474	3	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.117	0.000	0,000	0.117	0.116	0.117	69,196,115
OM0000002200	AHLI BANK	468	74	3	0.159	0.159	0.158	0.158	0.159	-0.001	-0.629	0.158	0.150	0.158	10,427,674,451
OM0000001020	ASDAD SHIPPING	71,570	9,151	28	0.118	0.118	0.117	0.117	0.118	-0.001	-0.847	0.117	0.117	0.107	609,423,081
OM0000007678	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	4,100,191	1,152,967	282	0.284	0.286	0.278	0.280	0.283	-0.003	-1,040	0.280	0.280	0.280	1,012,240,000,000
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	52,587	3,907	6	0.074	0.075	0.074	0.074	0.075	-0.001	-1.333	0.074	0.074	0.074	6,290,000
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	68,246	6,414	15	0.075	0.076	0.074	0.074	0.075	-0.001	-1.333	0.074	0.074	0.075	37,838,716
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	1,772,071	129,211	85	0.073	0.073	0.072	0.072	0.073	-0.001	-1.370	0.072	0.072	0.072	20,669,049
OM0000003521	GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING	123,401	8,885	12	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.072	0.073	-0.001	-1.370	0.072	0.072	0.072	14,615,024
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	2,700	181	1	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.068	-0.001	-1.471	0.067	0.067	0.069	1,407,000
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	10,887,281	1,056,500	70	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.069	-0.002	-2.020	0.067	0.062	0.067	218,984,444
OM0000002580	OMAN EDUCATION & TRAINING INVESTMENTS	650	650	1	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.000	0,000	1.000	1.000	1.000	10,000,000
OM0000005280	OMAN ARAB BANK	210,890	30,104	24	0.147	0.147	0.140	0.140	0.146	-0.006	-4.110	0.140	0.140	0.140	233,717,400
OM0000001426	OMAN REFRESHMENT	500	425	1	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.850	0.900	-0.050	-5.556	0.850	0.850	0.890	42,500,000
Total		18,476,673	2,553,325	643											

BY CENTRAL BANK OF OMAN

Sohar International designated as a domestic systemically important bank



MUSCAT: Marking a significant milestone in its journey of growth and resilience, Sohar International Bank ("Bank") has been officially designated as a Domestic Systemically Important Bank (D-SIB) by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO). This recognition solidifies the Bank's standing as a vital pillar of Oman's financial ecosystem,

reinforcing its responsibility in upholding economic stability and national prosperity. Abdulwahid Al Murshidi, Chief Executive Officer of the Bank, stated, "Being designated as a D-SIB is a proud moment for Sohar International. This recognition is not just an acknowledgment of our growing influence but also a responsibility

that we embrace wholeheartedly. As we continue to evolve and expand, we remain dedicated to delivering innovative banking solutions, empowering businesses and individuals, and contributing to Oman's long-term economic progress." A D-SIB designation is applied to banks that play a crucial role in a country's financial system and their

continued stability is paramount to the overall health of the economy. As a domestically systemically important financial institution, Sohar International will operate under an enhanced regulatory framework in relation to capital adequacy, risk management, and governance designed to safeguard the banking sector from potential disruptions.

The designation reflects Sohar International's exceptional growth and its pivotal role in shaping the future of banking in Oman. With this recognition, the Bank is poised to further enhance its capabilities, drive sustainable growth, and reinforce its position as a trusted partner in the nation's financial progress.

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION IN ENERGY SECTOR

OQ reports strong 2024 results

Times News Service

MUSCAT: OQ announced a net profit of OMR1.2 billion (USD 3 billion) in its 2024 standalone financials, attributed to strong overall business performance and strategic divestments of certain assets. OQ's strong liquidity position enables further investment in growth initiatives across the energy value chain, aligned with its energy transition strategy, while also ensuring dividend distribution to its shareholder. OQ Group posted strong results for 2024, achieving record Revenue of OMR 15 billion (USD 40 billion) and OMR1.1 billion (USD 2.9 billion) in Consolidated Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortisation (EBITDA) and OMR513 million (USD 1.3 billion) in Consolidated Net Profit.

These notable results reflect OQ's disciplined portfolio management and its strategic vision to create sustainable value for its stakeholders.

Mulham Al Jarf, Chairman of OQ, underscored the company's steadfast dedication to advancing its strategic vision, with 2024 representing a pivotal milestone in this ongoing journey. Central to this progress has been the execution of its divestment strategy, designed to optimise its asset portfolio and elevate operational efficiency. In parallel, OQ has been proactively spearheading a series of renewable energy initiatives, aligning with global sustainability imperatives and expanding the diversity of its energy portfolio. Additionally, OQ has laid the foundation stone for its strategic fuel reserves in the Musandam and Dhofar governorates, positioning itself for long-term stability. A defining moment of 2024 was the historic inauguration of OQ8, marking another significant achievement in OQ's trajectory.

Ashraf Al-Mamari, Group CEO of OQ, stated: "Achieving these results in 2024 is a direct outcome of well-defined strategies focused on continually enhancing both operational and financial efficiency, even in the face of global challenges. This has strength-



ened our leadership position in Oman and the region, enabling us to turn challenges into opportunities, while delivering outstanding financial results."

On financial resilience, Al-Mamari added: "Our results not only demonstrate robust financial performance but are also driven by the implementation of our new operating model and highlight our consistent attention to long-term financial sustainability. Our targeted strategies focus on optimising resource allocation and maximising operational efficiency. This is further underscored by our rigorous approach to transparency, effective cost control, and disciplined capital management—core tenets of our financial strategy."



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RAHUL DAS
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MUSCAT: When in Rome, do as the Romans do.
This seems to be the motto for us when we visited the Eternal City during the Eid holidays.
Almost 3,000 years of history and there's no sign of Rome losing its charm.
It still remains Italy's most visited city, probably because of the number of ancient sites and history, a great food culture at many levels and its style.

Arriving in Rome
Arriving in Rome's Fiumicino airport was a breeze when you are travelling from Muscat International Airport in the national carrier, Oman Air.
A smooth on-the-ground and inflight experience, comfortable seats and unmatched level of luxury Oman Air ensures every step of your journey is simply unforgettable.

Flying aboard in the economy class cabins with fresh, bold tones and modern, plush upholstery with world class dining is a thrilling experience.
Waiting on my seat on 27A on WY147, when I boarded I was handed over a blanket, pillow and headset.

What really defined this flight experience, though, was the 10.6 inch display and staggering inflight entertainment which offered a great range of the latest Arabic, Bollywood and international movies - all at your fingertips.
Normally, when I'm travelling on long-haul in economy class, I'm clock-watching and trying to pass the time as quickly as possible with work, books and movies. That wasn't the case with this seven-hour daytime flight, though.

The national carrier has definitely honed the art of on board amenities and entertainment, even in its economy cabins.
The smooth flight conditions, bright and spacious cabin, excellent inflight entertainment, specially curated meals to satisfy our taste buds and friendly flight attendants all made the journey feel much shorter and more enjoyable than other recent long-haul flights.
Configured with 162 seats in a two-class configuration: 12 in business and 150 in economy, Oman Air flight to Rome was one of the best I've experienced.
Guests can fly with Oman Air from Muscat to Rome on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays.
The outbound flight departs from Muscat at 1450 and arrives in Rome at 2010, while the return flight departs from Rome at 2110 and arrives



in Muscat at 0545, next day.

Book at omanair.com to find the best rates on flights to Rome.

My Stay
I stayed at the Hilton Rome Eur La Lama which opened its doors in February 2023, with the grand

THINGS TO SEE IN ROME

Spanish Steps
From here you can see the panoramic view over Rome. They are romantic and iconic. When you climb them, you'll add your footsteps to those of artists and poets who used them as a central meeting place for over 300 years.

Piazza della Rotonda
This piazza that houses the Pantheon gets its name from the nearby church of Santa Maria Rotonda. Its centerpiece is the Fontana del Pantheon, which was built in 1575.

Pantheon
This former Roman temple was built on the site of an older temple built between 27 BC and 14 AD. It was rebuilt by the emperor Hadrian around 126 AD. Since 609 AD, it has functioned as a Catholic church. Its dome is the world's largest unreinforced concrete dome. The name, Pantheon, is translated roughly from Ancient Greek to mean, "devoted to all gods," but no one is completely certain how it originally was used.

Sant' Ignazio Church
The exterior of this church will catch your eye, and once you enter, you are in for some surprises. This 17th century Baroque church has stunning frescoes on its huge ceiling. There is a mirror that allows you to see the decorations without having to crane your neck.

Trevi Fountain
Built in 1762, its name, "Tre vie" is derived from the number three and street (Three Streets Fountain) because it was built at the intersection of Rome's then three most important thoroughfares. Seeing it in all its glory is pretty sublime and surreal.
Here you can throw a coin over your shoulder and make a wish while you admire its stunning, grand Baroque detail.

The Colosseum
The Colosseum Archaeological Park, which oversees one of Rome's most visited tourist attractions it's the granddaddy of sites in Rome. This 2,000 year old site of ancient gladiator battles is a mix between horror and architectural beauty. You'll marvel that so much of it is still intact. It's a symbol of the power of the Roman Empire and provides a window into the lives of ancient Romans. Its structure will astound you, and if you are able to, try as hard as you can to get a night ticket to see the underground and gladiator gates and walk on the arena floor.

Footnote
Don't forget, Rome is a city built on hills and maps don't indicate gradient, so it is sometimes wiser to take the longer route than a steep climb.



opening party in October 2023, featuring a unique design with a focus on environmental sustainability: 16 floors, 60 metres in height, 130 metres in length, 16 metres in width, with six panoramic elevators, 439 rooms, one restaurant, one bar, one upcoming rooftop restaurant, one fitness center, seven meeting rooms and direct access to La Nuvola Convention Centre.
The hotel is located in the heart of Rome, EUR district, a key hub for major corporations as well as a lively area where shopping, entertainment, food and culture are blended together, immersed in the surrounding greenery and significant architectural works.
The futuristic structure, an example of architectural mastery, gets its name "La Lama" (The Blade) from its distinctive shape. It stands right next to the Rome Convention Center La Nuvola (The Cloud), both projects by the architect Massimiliano Fuksas.
The hotel offers stunning views from every angle and, just a few months after its opening, has already become a landmark for the city and a key destination, a contemporary hotel dedicated to international guests as well as the local community. It serves not only as a travel destination for business or leisure but also as a venue for events, meetings, or daily appointments, thanks to its strategic location, easily accessible from Fiumicino and Ciampino airports and with the subway station just a walk away.
If you need a succinct slice of Roman history, much of it is on this piazza and revolves around this hotel. The uniqueness is evident right from the external structure, with its original shape rising high into the sky, an example of architectural mastery created by Architect Fuksas. Inside, guests are struck by the sculpture by Arnaldo Pomodoro, a bronze stele that reaches upward, an obelisk guiding the gaze through the grand void with absolute effect, all the way up to the 16th floor.
Turning towards the reception desk, the eye is then captivated by the large monumental mosaic created by Marilù Rebecchini, celebrating the most iconic views and monuments of the city of Rome. The mosaic frames the desks, designed by the Studio Lorenzo Bellini Atelier, as well as all the hotel interiors, with evident references to the Art Deco design of the 1930s-1940s, said Paolo Bellè, General Manager of Hilton Rome Eur La Lama, Hilton Rome Airport and Hilton Garden Inn Rome Airport.

SPORTS

Manchester City back into top four of the Premier League with a 5-2 win



Palace travelled to Manchester with seven wins from eight games and looked to be on the way to another win after Eberechi Eze and Chris Richards put the visiting team 2-0 up

LONDON: Manchester City moved back into the top-four of the Premier League with a 5-2 win at home to Crystal Palace on Saturday. Palace travelled to Manchester with seven wins from eight games and looked to be on the way to another win after Eberechi Eze and Chris Richards put the visiting team 2-0 up after 21 minutes. It could have been 3-0, but a goal was ruled out for offside before Kevin de Bruyne pulled City back into the match after 33 minutes with a free kick that went in off the post and the Belgian, who will leave the club at the end of the sea-

son, went on to give a vintage performance. Omar Marmoush equalized in the 36th minute and Pep Guardiola's side grabbed the game in the second half with goals from Mateo Kovacic, James McAtee and Nico O'Reilly, as City looked more like the all-conquering side of recent campaigns. An Arsenal side with one eye on next week's Champions League return leg in Madrid was held 1-1 at home to Brentford. Thomas Partey, playing at right back, surged through to put Arsenal ahead, but Yoane Wissa's acrobatic finish saw Brentford save a

point in a game where Arsenal had more control, but neither side created many clear-cut chances. Nottingham Forest suffered a setback as Abdoulaye Doucoure's 94th minute goal saw Everton claim all three points at the City Ground. Everton defended well and took the win after a swift counter-attack ended with Dwight McNeil setting up the only goal of the game. Aston Villa left it late before taking what was ultimately a comfortable 3-0 win away to already-relegated Southampton, despite Marco Asensio missing two penalties for the visiting team. Villa looked flat in the first half after its midweek Champions League defeat to Paris Saint Germain, but never looked back after Ollie Watkins opened the scoring in the 73rd minute, with Donyell Malen doubling the lead three minutes later and John McGinn rounding off the win in injury time. Elsewhere, Leicester City avoided a 10th consecutive league defeat with a 2-2 draw away to Brighton. **Xinhua**

DRAMATIC 2-2 DRAW

Dortmund frustrate Bayern in Bundesliga



BERLIN: Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund played out a dramatic 2-2 draw on Saturday, with the Bavarians unable to capitalise on Leverkusen's earlier draw but keeping its lead at six points with five games to go. The host controlled much of the opening exchanges, dominating possession and creating several chances. Michael Olise and Harry Kane were both denied by Dortmund goalkeeper Gregor Kobel, who produced a series of fine saves to keep the score level at the break. The momentum shifted just three minutes after the restart. Dortmund striker Maximilian Beier rose highest to meet Julian Ryerson's cross and head past Bayern goalkeeper Noah Urbig to give the visitor a surprise 1-0 lead with its first shot on target. Bayern responded with plenty of vigour, but Kane and Stanisic both missed chances to level the score. Coach Vincent Kompany made a double substitution just after the hour mark, bringing on Serge Gnabry and Aleksandar Pavlovic in a bid to breathe new life into his side. The impact was instant. Gnabry set up Raphael Guerreiro in the 65th minute to level the score against his former club, before the Germany international scored himself just four minutes

later, cutting through the Dortmund defense and finishing clinically to give Bayern a 2-1 lead. But Dortmund wasn't done yet. In the 75th minute, Serhou Guirassy's shot was saved by Urbig, but Waldemar Anton was the quickest to react and pounced on the rebound to level the score at 2-2. Both sides had late chances to win the game, with Kane firing wide and Dortmund substitute Gross hitting the roof of the net. With Leverkusen held to a goalless draw by Union Berlin earlier in the day, leader Bayern missed out on a chance to extend its lead at the top but maintained the six-point advantage. "It was probably a great game for the fans to watch. We were determined to win and brought a lot of energy, but in the end, it was a game of missed chances. Serge did well off the bench, but our efficiency just wasn't there today," said Bayern veteran Thomas Muller. Elsewhere, Hoffenheim beat Mainz 2-0 to pick up vital points in its relegation battle. Freiburg ended its losing streak with a 2-1 win over Borussia Monchengladbach. Ten-man Augsburg secured a 2-1 win at relegation-threatened Bochum, while St. Pauli beat Holstein Kiel 2-1 at the bottom of the table. **Xinhua**

CRICKET ENCOUNTER

IPL 2025: SRH mauls PBKS' big target as Abhishek launches blitzkrieg

HYDERABAD : Abhishek Sharma and his 171-run partnership with Travis Head made light work of Punjab Kings' (PBKS) mammoth target of 246 runs as Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) cruised home by eight wickets with nine balls left in their IPL encounter on Saturday. Abhishek Sharma stuck all across the ground at Uppal Stadium here to loud cheers from the spectators. With this comeback win after four successive losses, SRH and most importantly, their 'Travishek' opening pair are back to what they do best: Cause carnage. This is also the second-highest run chase in IPL history, with 262 chased by PBKS against defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) last year being at the top. SRH has risen to the eighth spot with two wins and four losses while PBKS is at sixth place, with three wins and two losses. Chasing 246 runs, opener Travis Head started with two fours against Arshdeep Singh in the first over. In the next two overs, Abhishek Sharma hit Marco Jansen for four boundaries in the second over, while Head secured a hat-trick of fours against Arshdeep. The fourth over by Yash Thakur was an expensive one, yielding 20 runs. A four and six from Abhishek helped SRH reach the 50-run mark in 3.3 overs and Yash himself erred by delivering SRH freebies in the form of no ball and wides. Abhishek reached his first fifty of IPL 2025 in 19 balls, with seven fours and three sixes. At the end of six overs, SRH was 83/0, with Head (28*) and Abhishek (49*) unbeaten. Abhishek and Head continued to make a meal out of spinners, Glenn Maxwell and Yuzvendra Chahal. 100-run was up for SRH in 7.3 overs. In the 10th over, Jansen was hit for 20 runs, including two fours



and two sixes by Abhishek himself. At the end of 10 overs, SRH was 143/0, with Abhishek (87*) and Head (49*) unbeaten. Head completed his half-century in 31 balls, his second of the tournament. 150 runs were up for SRH in 10.5 overs. The 171-run stand between 'Travishek' was broken when a delivery from Chahal landed in Maxwell's hands, removing the left-hander for 66 in 37 balls, with nine fours and three sixes. Abhishek made his maiden IPL ton in just 40 balls, with 11 fours and six sixes. However, after his century, Abhishek continued his carnage, bullying Chahal by looting 19 runs in the 15th over. 200-run mark was up for SRH in 14.5 overs. Arshdeep got his team a breakthrough, removing Abhishek for a 55-ball 141, with 14 fours and 10 sixes. SRH was 222/2 in 16.2 overs. SRH chased down the target with nine balls left, with Heinrich Klaasen (21*) and Ishan Kishan (9*) unbeaten.

Earlier, skipper Shreyas Iyer's fifty and right-hand batter Marcus Stoinis's cameo in the end powered the Punjab Kings (PBKS) side to a massive total of 245/6 in their 20 overs against the Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) in the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 on Saturday. PBKS skipper Iyer won the toss and opted to bat first at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad. Batters Prabhsimran Singh and Priyansh Arya came out in the middle to open the innings for their side. In the first over, Prabhsimran blasted Mohammed Shami for three fours. In the second over, skipper Pat Cummins gave away 16 runs, with Priyansh being the aggressor with four and six. In the third over, Shami was taken down for three sixes and a four. PBKS is 53/0, with Priyansh (29*) and Prabhsimran (23*) unbeaten. The first wicket fell in the fourth over at the score of 66 as Harshal Patel sent back Priyansh (36 runs off 13 balls) to the pavilion.

Following Arya's wicket, team skipper Shreyas Iyer came out in the middle to bat, along with Prabhsimran. Iyer ended the powerplay with a six. After the end of six overs, PBKS were 89/1 with Prabhsimran (41*) and Iyer (9*) unbeaten. Debutant Eshan Malinga took his maiden IPL wicket as a fine catch at mid-off from Pat Cummins to dismiss Prabhsimran (42 in 23 balls, with seven fours and a six) at the score of 91 in the seventh over. Left-hand batter Nehal Wadhwa came out to bat next. After the end of 10 overs, PBKS were 120/2, with Shreyas (24*) and Nehal Wadhwa (13*) in the middle. 20 runs came from leg-spinner Zeeshan Ansari's over as Iyer smashed a four and two sixes. After the completion of the 12th over, PBKS were 149/2, with Iyer (48*) and Wadhwa (17*) on the crease. Iyer went on to score his third half-century of IPL 2025 in just 22 balls, which came with two fours and five sixes. **ANI**

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Nothing too serious, just a bit of banter: Travis Head on his verbal spat with Maxwell

HYDERABAD: After the completion of the Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 encounter against Punjab Kings (PBKS), Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) opener Travis Head opened up and shared his thoughts on the verbal spat between him and Glenn Maxwell and Marcus Stoinis during the ninth over of the 27th fixture of the ongoing 18th edition of the cash-rich league. During the ninth over of the innings, Glenn Maxwell was brought into the attack. On the third and fourth deliveries of the over, Head slammed two consecutive sixes off Maxwell, which frustrated him. After the two sixes, Maxwell exchanged a few words with the Hyderabad opener. After the completion of the over, Head walked up to Maxwell and responded, sparking

a heated verbal exchange between the two. The situation escalated until the on-field umpire stepped in to finish the spat. Soon after, Marcus Stoinis, fellow Australian and Punjab Kings all-rounder, joined in and was seen engaging in a fresh argument with Head. Speaking at the post-match presentation on the verbal exchange, the 31-year-old player said, "You bring out the best and the worst in each other when you know them so well, nothing too serious, just a bit of banter." "Not bad, nice to get on the winners list. It was an exceptional night; we needed it. We had our work cut out at the halfway point. We gave ourselves a chance, showed a bit more patience at the start. We knew the plans they were going to come with. Gave ourselves



a bit more time and got off to a flyer. We did the things we did really well last year, and that's what made us such a good partnership. It's just

about encouraging each other, picking our targets and setting the stage. We've seen 270-280 scored on that wicket. We've played on

slightly different wickets, but no.2 seems to put out big scores. Everything had to go right for us to chase down 240," the Australian batter added. **Hayden applauds Head-Abhishek duo for 'measured' brilliance in record chase** Former Australian opener Matthew Hayden lauded the tactical brilliance and composure shown by Travis Head and Abhishek Sharma, whose explosive opening stand powered Sunrisers Hyderabad to a historic run chase against Punjab Kings in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL). Praising their approach, JioStar expert Hayden said on JioHotstar, "It was a beautiful, measured partnership. Travis Head spoke in the post-match interview about how

they operated in slightly different modes--Abhishek was set to take on the spinners, while Head took on the pace attack and allowed himself some time." Hayden highlighted the rarity of such thoughtful execution in the high-pressure format of T20 cricket. "You don't often hear that in T20 cricket, especially during a massive run chase, where even a ball or two can create pressure. But this was a great partnership," he said. Reflecting on the turnaround, Hayden added, "Looking at those numbers, it's remarkable how the franchise, who seemed down just three hours ago, has risen like a phoenix tonight." The Head-Abhishek partnership underlined Sunrisers Hyderabad's resurgence in the tournament. **ANI**

IN PICTURES

Timeless art of Indonesia's Wayang Play

People practice glove puppetry known as Wayang Potehi in preparation for the upcoming Chinese New Year show at Chinatown in Surabaya, East Java Province, Indonesia. Wayang, a unique theatrical form honoured as Indonesia's cultural crown jewel, consists mainly of shadow puppetry (Wayang Kulit in Indonesian), wooden puppetry (Wayang Golek in Indonesian), and human puppetry (Wayang Orang in Indonesian). Xinhua



Full moon seen in Warsaw, Poland
A full moon is seen in the sky over Warsaw, Poland. Xinhua



Yunnan flower fragrance spreads in Vietnam
Nguyen Thuy Van, a Vietnamese florist, is pictured at a flower base in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan Province. Nguyen Thuy Van, a florist from Lao Cai province in Vietnam, has been engaged in the flower industry for 14 years. She has been selling Yunnan flowers to Vietnam since 2018. Xinhua



Miao Sisters Festival celebrated in SW China's Guizhou
An aerial drone picture shows people in ethnic costumes attending a singing event to celebrate the Miao Sisters Festival in Taijiang County, southwest China's Guizhou Province. Xinhua



Palm Sunday celebrated in Beirut, Lebanon
A girl celebrates Palm Sunday in Beirut, Lebanon. Palm Sunday, a Christian feast that falls on the Sunday before Easter, marks the beginning of the Holy Week. Xinhua



Mumbai: 20 years success party of 'Maddock Films'
Bollywood actress Rashmika Mandanna poses for a picture during the 20 years success party of Dinesh Vijan's production house 'Maddock Films', in Mumbai. ANI Photo

ROUND-UP

Now is the time to save on CS35 Plus Trend

Available only until April 20, the special Ramadan deal transforms the CS35 Plus Trend into one of the most value-packed SUVs on the market



MUSCAT: If you are looking to upgrade your drive with style, performance, and unbeatable value now is the perfect time to take the wheel of the Changan CS35 Plus Trend. Backed by a limited-time Ramadan promotional package, this offer goes beyond expectations, combining thoughtful perks, long-term savings, and a feature-rich compact SUV that's built for modern living.

Available only until April 20, this special Ramadan deal transforms

the CS35 Plus Trend into one of the most value-packed SUVs on the market. With complimentary vehicle registration for private use and first-year insurance coverage across Oman and the UAE, buyers are getting far more than just a new car. The deal is further sweetened with a free periodic maintenance package covering 3 years or 75,000 km, built-in 5% VAT, and an impressive 6-year or 250,000 km warranty. All of this is available for just OMR 107 per month with a 20% down payment and up to six-year

financing for eligible salaried individuals (subject to bank approvals). The CS35 Plus Trend blends practicality with flair. Under the hood is a turbocharged 1.4L engine paired with a smooth 7-speed DCT transmission, perfect for efficient commuting or weekend getaways. Its sleek exterior features LED headlamps, daytime running lights, and 17-inch alloy wheels, ensuring it looks just as confident as it feels on the road. The cabin brings comfort and connectivity together with synthetic leather

seats, a 10.25-inch infotainment touchscreen, and a fully digital instrument cluster. Safety tech like dual front airbags, ABS with EBD, Hill Hold Control, electronic stability control, and a rearview camera ensure you're protected at every turn. Features like rear AC outlets, keyless entry, and push-button start make every drive enjoyable and hassle-free. The CS35 Plus Limited stands out for those who desire extra refinement in every drive. While it shares the same efficient turbo engine and DCT as the Trend, it ups the ante with 18-inch alloy wheels, a panoramic sunroof, and automatic LED headlights. The interior gets an upscale makeover with premium leather seating, an electrically adjustable driver seat, and a larger 7-inch digital cluster. Automatic AC control, wireless charging, and a rear reading light offer seamless convenience, while added safety features like side airbags, Lane Departure Warning, and a 360-degree camera provide confidence at every angle. Whether you choose the well-rounded Trend or the tech-rich Limited, the CS35 Plus series promises smart performance, modern comfort, and real value.



Soccer Carnival on April 17, 18

MUSCAT: The organisers of the 'Soccer Carnival' have announced that preparations for the event's second edition, hosted by Mefriend, the digital platform of Gulf Madhyamam group, are well underway. The 'Soccer Carnival' will take place at the Bowsher Club Stadium in Muscat on April 17 and 18, with free entry on both days. The event will feature the presence of notable celebrities, including Indian football star C.K. Vineeth, popular Malayalam cinema action star Antony Varghese (Pepe), and beloved family entertainer Dane Davis. This year's Soccer Carnival promises to be even more innovative and exciting. While 16 "7's" teams battle for the prestigious "Crown of Muscat" title, the Bowsher Club Stadium will come alive with a vibrant mix of culinary delights and cultural performances. The organizers have announced that there will be a variety of

events designed for children and families to enjoy. The winners and runners-up will receive the largest prize money in Oman, and players will also be recognized with encouragement awards. Visitors can indulge in a diverse array of flavors, as over 20 food stalls offering authentic Kerala cuisine will be set up. Special sections will highlight Malabar dishes and Kannur specialties. The second day of the carnival will be even more vibrant, featuring a wide range of entertainment activities and competitions for children and families, with plenty of prizes for the winners. There will be various games and quiz competitions for children and women, along with face painting, shootouts, and other exciting contests. Additionally, spot competitions and cultural performances involving the audience will take place, ensuring a lively atmosphere throughout the day.

BankDhofar introduces bespoke concierge service for private banking clients

MUSCAT: Continuing its commitment to excellence and best-in-class services, BankDhofar has partnered with Nuclei Technologies to launch ARISE, an exclusive concierge service tailored to the unique global needs of its growing base of high-net-worth individuals and business families. Designed to redefine luxury and convenience, ARISE offers a suite of premium, complimentary services, including chauffeur-driven airport transfers, VIP meet-and-greet experiences, and privileged access to some of the world's most sought-after events spanning

music, fashion, and business. Additionally, the travel concierge ensures that clients enjoy unparalleled VIP services unavailable through conventional channels. Eligible private banking clients will be assigned a dedicated concierge manager, providing round-the-clock access, seven days a week. Clients can seamlessly avail themselves of services via a dedicated phone line or an intuitive online platform. Amjad Al Lawati, Chief Retail Banking Officer, praised the bank's forward-thinking approach: "The ARISE concierge service redefines

accessibility and convenience for our private banking clients. With this service, clients can charter a private jet one day and receive expert consultation on the best universities for their children the next. ARISE complements our private banking suite, which includes financial and wealth management solutions and enhanced onshore banking services. This initiative underscores our commitment to delivering innovative, bespoke solutions that elevate our clients' lifestyles while securing their legacies." BankDhofar has collaborated with Nuclei Technologies, a glob-

ally recognized IT firm specializing in intelligent ecosystems that drive deep customer engagement. The launch of ARISE marks a significant enhancement to BankDhofar's Private Banking division, which was formally introduced in June 2024. This division caters to high-net-worth and ultra-high-net-worth clients, offering an array of bespoke financial, wealth and advisory services. In addition to customized checking and savings accounts, clients benefit from tailored investment guidance, preferential pricing, and access to alternative investment opportunities.



Bank Muscat awarded Best Bank for FX in Oman

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat, the leading financial services provider in the Sultanate of Oman, has been awarded the Best Bank for FX in Oman title by Global Finance. This recognition is a testament to the Bank's excellence and leading role in providing innovative and integrated services to customers from corporates and institutions locally, regionally, and globally. Bank Muscat is a well-known banking services provider in the region and is trusted by various local and international institutions. It serves as a primary reference for a large number of customers benefiting from a wide array of innovative banking services and solutions offered by Bank Muscat's Global Treasury Division. This division boasts a highly skilled and experienced team capable of executing large transactions and managing long-term hedging operations. The Bank provides corporate customers with diverse FX solutions, along with various hedging options that enable customers to systematically and thoughtfully manage market volatility. This positions Bank Muscat among the leading banking institutions in the region, driving it to remain committed to delivering innova-

tive banking solutions and services to customers. The Bank operates across all global financial markets during official working days worldwide. As part of its proactive efforts to keep customers informed about financial market developments and their future, the Bank regularly organizes seminars and workshops that serve as platforms to enhance customers' understanding of market trends and provide opportunities for sharing experiences with specialists and interested parties. Bank Muscat also offers its customers from corporates exclusive market updates through daily newsletters, messages, and notifications about financial market news and developments. The Global Treasury Division team sends these updates daily via WhatsApp to decision makers with expertise in managing customer transactions in the foreign market and associated risk management. Notably, Bank Muscat has established strategic partnerships with several leading global banks to support the international business requirements of its corporate customers, enhancing the Bank's capabilities to meet the needs of global financial markets.

Alizz Islamic Bank and Imam Jabir Bin Zaid Waqf Foundation conclude training programme on AAOIFI Sharia standards

MUSCAT: Alizz Islamic Bank and Imam Jabir Bin Zaid Waqf Foundation recently concluded a Training Programme on Sharia Standards Issued by the Accounting and Auditing Organization for Islamic Financial Institutions (AAOIFI) that was conducted by His Eminence Sheikh Aflah bin Ahmed Al Khalili, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Imam Jabir bin Zaid Waqf Foundation and was held over 4 weeks in the Grand Hall at the Alizz Islamic Bank head office in Wilayat Baushar. The programme is the first of its kind in Oman and was designed to transform the understanding and application of Islamic financial principles, equipping the participants with the skills to critically analyse and evaluate the 61 AAOIFI standards effectively. The programme falls under the umbrella of 'Manar Alizz', which is the voice of the bank for cultural awareness about Islamic Bank-



ing and its principle and aligns with the bank's overall strategy of knowledge sharing. Speaking about the course Mr. Issa bin Salim Al Riyami, Head of Shari'a Compliance and Audit of Alizz Islamic Bank said, "We are pleased to have partnered with Imam Jabir bin Zaid Waqf Foundation on this important programme that was conducted by His Eminence Sheikh Aflah

bin Ahmed Al Khalili. The cornerstone of the Islamic banking industry is the adherence to and compliance with the rules and principles of Islamic Sharia under the broader collective reasoning by prominent scholars and based on evidence found in the Holy Quran and Sunna. "The AAOIFI Sharia Standards have become the major compilation of contemporary Fiqh

reasoning in the area of Fiqh al-Muamalat (Jurisprudence of Financial Transactions) around the globe. The standards cover a large array of Islamic financial contracts and products, including those pertaining to Islamic banking, Islamic insurance, investment banking, capital markets, financing and so on and that is why this course is essential and adds value to the community."

Sayarti expands fleet with addition of 2025 GAC M8

MUSCAT: In line with its commitment to providing advanced, reliable, and sustainable transportation solutions, Sayarti Rental, a part of the Automotive sector of The Zubair Corporation and a leader in the nation's transportation and equipment rental sector — has announced the latest expansion of its fleet with the addition of the 2025 GAC M8. This strategic addition comes through a partnership with Gargash Group, the exclusive distributor of GAC vehicles in the Sultanate of Oman. The integration of the premium 2025 GAC M8 reflects Sayarti's ongoing efforts to offer cutting-edge transportation solutions that meet the evolving needs of both government and private sector clients, as well as individual customers. The new model combines luxury, technology, and practical-



ity — positioning it as an ideal choice for business and leisure users alike. Commenting on this milestone, Sohraab Hasnain, General Manager of Sayarti Rental and Used Cars, said, "This expansion aligns with Sayarti's strategic vision to continuously enhance its fleet with technologically advanced vehicles, in line with the

company's growth and expansion plans. The addition of the GAC M8 marks a significant step forward in providing high-end vehicles with advanced features and low operating costs, reinforcing our commitment to offering best-in-class mobility solutions across the Sultanate. We are confident that our partnership with Gargash Group

will further strengthen our ability to meet the diverse needs of our customers." Assim Shaikh, Business Manager at GAC Oman, also expressed his enthusiasm for the collaboration, stating, "We are delighted to partner with Sayarti to provide vehicles that exceed market expectations in terms of quality, performance, and competitive pricing. The 2025 GAC M8, with its distinctive design, spacious interior, and advanced technology, offers an exceptional experience for both corporate and family users." Designed with three rows of seating to comfortably accommodate up to seven passengers, the GAC M8 boasts a bold and sophisticated exterior, alongside a technology-rich cabin that caters to the comfort and convenience of both drivers and passengers.

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Vehicles shown for illustrative purposes. Accessories shown not part of standard equipment. Specifications subject to change without notice.

*Conditions apply.

2024 Results:

Energy beyond Limits

Key Highlights from OQ 2024 Annual Report

Energy with Value

Financial Resilience and Growth



Energy for Growth

Maximising Value and Streamlining Operations



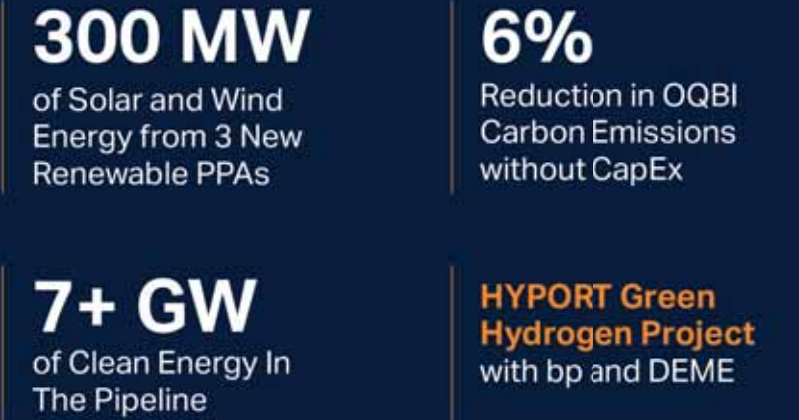
Energy with Roots

Local Impact and Socio-Economic Resilience



Energy with Vision

Leadership in Energy Transition



Energy with Care

Safety, People, and Culture



KEY MILESTONES

- Inauguration of OQ8**
Under the auspices of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik and His Highness Sheikh Mishal Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah, Emir of the State of Kuwait.
- Record-Breaking Revenue**
OQ has achieved a revenue of **\$40 billion** for the first time in its history.
- First Time in Oman**
OQ hosted the 18th Annual Gulf Petrochemicals and Chemicals Association Forum, with over 2,700 delegates and 54+ exhibiting companies.
- Groundbreaking of Strategic Fuel Reserves**
Projects in Dhofar and Musandam.
- Advanced Three Renewable Energy Projects**
Development of 300 MW of solar and wind energy.