

478 homes under construction for low-income families: MHUP

Our Correspondent
Muscat

In line with directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik, Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning (MHUP) is implementing 478 housing units designed to support low-income and social security families across the sultanate.

The ministry's half-yearly report highlights significant progress in executing Royal Directives aimed at bolstering the housing assistance programme. Currently, 478 housing units are under construction; to date 747 housing units have been delivered, which constitutes 60% of the project planned from 2022 to the present.

The report states that RO70mn has been allocated for the housing assistance programme for fiscal year 2024-2025. This funding is expected to benefit approximately 2,400 families. In response to Royal Directives for social housing pro-



RO70mn has been allocated for the housing assistance programme for fiscal year 2024-2025. This funding is expected to benefit approximately 2,400 families

jects, the report outlines several key initiatives, including construction of 20 housing units in Kumzar Village in Khasab, Mu-

sandam; 45 housing units in Al Rahibat, North Sharqiyah; 19 housing units in Wadi Bani Khalid, North Sharqiyah; ten

housing units in the Manda area of Jebel Shams, Dakhliyah; 15 housing units in Jalan Bani Bu Ali, South Sharqiyah; and building 20

housing units and maintenance of 32 existing ones in Shalim and Hallaniyat Islands, Dhofar.

Additionally, compensation will be provided to 214 families in villages affected by climatic conditions in South Sharqiyah to as-

sist with buying or building homes.

MHUP is also making strides in completing a national strategic plan for housing assistance. To streamline services, it has launched six new services on the Amlak platform. The revised assistance scheme now considers family size and construction area, offering up to RO25,000 for smaller families (140sqm minimum) and up to RO30,000 for larger families (190sqm min-

imum), ensuring support is tailored to various housing needs.

This initiative not only reflects the ministry's proactive approach to addressing housing challenges but also aligns with the government's broader commitment to social welfare and economic inclusivity, aiming to ensure a stable and prosperous future for all citizens.

The report states that 266 housing units were sold across five integrated residential neighbourhoods. These include 60 housing units in Hai al Naseem, Barka; 88 housing units in Hisn al Zain, Bidbid; 25 housing units in Hai al Luban Sorouh, Nakhal; 22 housing units in Hai Majd, Sohar; and 71 housing units in Al Shorouk Residential Neighbourhood, Salalah.

The Tatwir platform has offered 1,012 investment opportunities within the investment programme, underscoring the ministry's ongoing efforts to foster real estate development and investment.

H M issues two Royal Decrees

Muscat - His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued two Royal Decrees on Monday reading as follows:

Royal Decree No 34/2024 ratifies an agreement signed in Tunis on June 28, 2024 by the Government of the Sultanate of Oman and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia on air services between their territories and beyond.

Article (1) stipulates that the above-mentioned agreement will be ratified in accordance with the version attached to this decree.

Article (2) states that this decree will be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

Royal Decree No 35/2024 ratifies an agreement of air services between the Government of the Sultanate of Oman and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania signed in Dar es Salaam on July 16, 2024.

Article (1) ratifies the aforementioned agreement in accordance with the version attached to this decree.

Article (2) states that this decree will be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue.

ONA



Oman fans get free Iraq visa for Sept 5 game

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Baghdad has announced that Omani fans travelling to attend the Asian qualifier match for the 2026 World Cup

against Iraq on September 5 will be exempt from visa fee.

The waiver applies to both land and air travellers entering Iraq. The exemption is valid for arrivals in Basra governorate from September 2 to 5.

H H Sayyid Theyazin bin

Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, visited the Oman national football team camp at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex Bausher recently.

During his visit, H H Sayyid Theyazin was briefed on the team's preparations for its up-

coming Asian qualifier match against Iraq by coach Jaroslav Silhavy.

H H Sayyid Theyazin conveyed his unwavering support and confidence in the team's abilities as it progresses to the World Cup qualifiers.



03

Hydrom lab to help meet 2030 green hydrogen targets

WHERE STYLE MEETS LUXURY

Introducing All-New 2025 TOYOTA

CAMRY

Introducing the all-new Toyota Camry, designed to leave a lasting impression. Equipped with a state-of-the-art engine and an 8-speed automatic transmission, the Camry offers exceptional fuel efficiency and a smooth driving experience. Visit your nearest Toyota showroom today and discover the excellence of the all-new Toyota Camry.

Saud Bahwan Automotive LLC
ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED C.R.NO:1703412

Wattayah Tel.: 24579050/60 • Branches Tel.: Barka 26887504/05, B.B.Ai 25553692, Bidaya 26803900, Buraimi 25660124, Dibba 26839000, Ibra 25571457/25570102, Ibroi 25667100, Mabala 24269400, Nizwa 25213015 / 25213008, Rustaq 26676199, Salalah 23217303 / 23217318, Soeb Al Mawaleh 24560013/24560029, Sinaw 25524203 / 25524783, Sohar 26858500, Sur 25541375/0103.

[Facebook.com/toyotaooman](https://www.facebook.com/toyotaooman)
 [YouTube.com/toyotaooman](https://www.youtube.com/toyotaooman)
 [Instagram.com/toyotaooman](https://www.instagram.com/toyotaooman)
 [Twitter.com/toyotaooman](https://twitter.com/toyotaooman)
 www.toyotaoman.com

NATION

02 | MUSCAT DAILY | TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 03, 2024

Terms and conditions apply



Save for your future goals today

With Al Heson Savings Account and Ladies Account

Start Saving with BankDhofar Ladies account!



NDC Commandant receives Indian delegation

Muscat - Rear Admiral Ali Abdullah al Shidi, Commandant of the National Defence College (NDC) on Monday received a delegation from the National Defence College of the Republic of India, which is currently on a visit to the Sultanate of Oman. During the meeting at the NDC's headquarters in Bait Al Falaj Garrison, the two sides discussed several academic and training topics. Moreover, the guests were briefed about the NDC and its facilities. They also toured its various departments. ONA

MTCIT to organise drone competition on September 5

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology (MTCIT) will hold a national drone competition on September 5 at 3pm, at the Sultan Qaboos University's College of Engineering. This annual event - 'Oman Competition for Drones' - is a collaborative effort between the ministry and the university. "The competition will showcase drones equipped with artificial intelligence systems. The programme will include workshops and training courses aimed at developing participants' skills," an official from MTCIT said. The primary goal of this contest is to raise public awareness

about the benefits of drones, while empowering Omani youth to offer technological solutions. It seeks to make the production of drones commercially viable and generate jobs in fields such as drone piloting, programming, assembly, maintenance, image analysis, machine vision and AI programming. The initiative targets college and university students, who are eager to acquire new technical skills, particularly in drone technology, to actively contribute to the implementation of technical solutions and thereby strengthening the national economy. Additionally, the programme aims to prepare and support the winning participants for regional and international competitions.

CONDOLENCES

With deep respect, Board of Directors, Management & Staff of Special Oilfield Services LLC convey their heartfelt condolences to the family of

Abbas Obaid Al Shokari, the Chief Operating Officer, on his sad demise,

pray that his soul may reside in paradise and ask Allah to grant patience and comfort to his family



be'ah to hold OSW Awards next year to honour excellence in CSR, sustainability

Our Correspondent
Muscat

The Oman Sustainability Week (OSW) Awards 2025, co-organised by the Oman Environmental Services Holding Company - be'ah - and CONNECT, will celebrate organisations with exceptional sustainability practices during a gala event on May 11 next year. The awards will utilise the Oman Sustainability Index framework, which assesses performance in environmental, social, and governance (ESG) areas based on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standard, in collaboration with the Center for Sustainability and Excellence (CSE) in Chicago, US. The Oman Sustainability Index helps organisations measure and integrate ethical practices into their strategies, emphasising long-term commitments to economic, social, and environmental responsibility. It also highlights opportunities and risks, fostering transparency and

Organisations have significantly improved their sustainability scores through our self-assessment tool

DR MOHAB ALI AL HINAI

improvement within specified sectors. Participants will receive detailed feedback to help future developments. The OSW Awards will feature senior dignitaries, including representatives from the Ministry of Energy and Minerals and the Ministry of Transport, Commu-

nications, and Information Technology, alongside prominent C-suite executives and stakeholders. The event has grown from 12 participants in 2022 to 28 in 2024. "Organisations have significantly improved their sustainability scores through our self-assessment tool and feedback reports," said Dr Mohab Ali al Hina'i, vice president - Sustainability and Circular Economy at be'ah, while underlining that "participation in the OSW Awards is a key opportunity for all entities - corporations, SMEs, government bodies, and academic institutions - to align with the global, regional, and local sustainability trends, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Oman Vision 2040." Significantly, the 'Eco-Mobility Award' category, introduced last year, will return to recognise contributions towards the national Net Zero 2050 goal. This category will assess active projects, services and initiatives in Oman.

OHA outlines 1st edition of Oman Open Hockey5s Championship

Muscat - Oman Hockey Association (OHA) on Monday released the details of the first edition of Oman Open Hockey Five-a-Sides (Hockey5s) Championship, to be held from September 8 to 11. The four-day event will see the participation of eight teams viz, the Royal Army of Oman, the Royal Guard of Oman, the Royal Navy of Oman, Al Fayhaa Establishment, Security and Safety Corporation, Jindal Shaded Company, Badr Al Samaa Group and FAB Company. The tournament's schedule was unveiled during a press conference held on the premises of the Oman Olympic Committee and Sports Federations in the presence of Dr Marwan Juma al Juma, chairman of the Board of Directors of Oman Hockey Association; Faisal Habib al Balushi, tournament's technical director; and the representatives of the participating teams.

BUY BAHAR

OWN YOUR DREAM



TESLA MODEL Y

75 GRAND PRIZES

15 iPhone 15 10 Samsung S24 5 iPhone 14 20 Washing Machines 25 Gift Vouchers worth RO 50 each

Buy any BAHAR, No. 1, Farah, Pinex, Spark products worth RO 3, get a coupon to participate in the raffle draw



EVERYONE IS A WINNER (32,000+ SCRATCH & WIN PRIZES)

Promotion period: 25th July - 7th October 2024 Draw dates: 2nd September & 9th October 2024

Hydrom lab to help meet 2030 green hydrogen targets

Muscat - Hydrom, in cooperation with Oman Vision 2040 Implementation Follow-up Unit and Ministry of Energy and Minerals, kicked off a two-week Ecosystem Readiness Lab designed to advance national plans towards the 2030 green hydrogen production targets. The multi-sector lab will assess preparedness of the country's infrastructure within five critical streams, developing a synergistic roadmap to achieve Oman's desired green hydrogen future.

H E Salim Nasser al Afi, Minister of Energy and Minerals and Chairman of Hydrom, presided over the opening, during which he said, "Oman's commitment to green hydrogen is a cornerstone of the energy transition strategy



(VK Shafeer)

and a critical pathway to achieving the ambitions set out in Vision 2040."

He further emphasised, "The Ecosystem Readiness Lab is not just about preparing our infrastructure; it is about forging a unified, forward-looking strategy that aligns every sector of our

economy towards a sustainable and prosperous future. By leveraging our natural resources, enhancing local capabilities and fostering global partnerships, we will cement Oman's position as a global leader in green hydrogen."

The first workstream will focus on the construction and

engineering sector, assessing the capacity and readiness of local firms to undertake large-scale green hydrogen projects while identifying gaps and exploring potential collaborations. The second workstream will examine the current and future needs of skilled labour including

identifying programmes to up-skill the national workforce. The third workstream will evaluate the existing regulatory framework particularly in the area of permits, seeking ways to streamline processes and eliminate bottlenecks to facilitate timely project execution through

a one-stop-shop approach. The fourth workstream will address the logistics sector's infrastructural and operational needs, ensuring that Oman's ports, transportation networks, and supply chains are fully-equipped to support green hydrogen production and export.

The fifth workstream, dedicated to local content, will explore opportunities across all sectors, identifying ways to maximise the involvement of local businesses across the green hydrogen value chain, as well as foster innovation and drive investment within the alternative energy sector.

Together, the various workstreams will aim to produce a comprehensive roadmap, with

detailed sectoral work plans, timelines and resource requirements to ensure measurability, accountability and transparency in tracking progress.

"These lab sessions are more than just a strategic exercise; they represent a significant step forward in ensuring that Oman's transition to green hydrogen is both inclusive and transformative," said Abdulaziz al Shidhani, Managing Director of Hydrom. "As we move towards our goal of producing over 1mn mtpa by 2030, our focus is on ensuring that every aspect of the ecosystem is fully prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead, laying the groundwork for long-term economic resilience for Oman."

MAFWR restoring 100 aflaj in Dhahirah

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) in Dhahirah is actively working on a significant project for the maintenance and rehabilitation of 100 aflaj irrigation systems at a cost of over RO848,000.

Salim bin Ali al Amrani, Director General of Agriculture and Water Resources in Dhahirah, emphasised the fact that the project is essential following the impact of recent climatic conditions and erosion of valleys. The directorate is committed to preserving these historic structures which are crucial for irrigating agricultural land and ensuring consistent water supply.

Amrani stressed the collective responsibility of society in preserving aflaj systems, underscoring their importance not just for irrigation but as symbols of cultural heritage and environmental



(Supplied photos)



stewardship.

According to Mubarak bin Salem al Jabri, Director of Water

Resources Department, maintenance and rehabilitation of 20 aflaj has been completed, with work ongoing on the remaining 80. The scope of the work includes sediment removal, channel excavation and protection measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of the falaj water flow.

Jabri informed that the aflaj project aims to support farmers and improve irrigation services.

"Aflaj are a traditional water source on which Omanis have depended for irrigation for ages. The types of aflaj vary according to the geological and hydrological characteristics of an area."

In 2023, Dhahirah successfully rehabilitated 36 aflaj, enhancing water flow and irrigation efficiency, leading to increased agricultural productivity. There are a total of 560 aflaj in Dhahirah.

Majan University College Receives Institutional Accreditation



for the Second Consecutive Time from the
Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation
and Quality Assurance of Education

Majan University College has once again received institutional accreditation from the Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education, having been the first higher education institution in the Sultanate to achieve this milestone, in 2017.

The institutional accreditation process involves a series of integrated procedures to ensure that higher education institutions are effectively fulfilling their mission and objectives, while also meeting global standards. Majan University College has successfully met all the criteria, aligning with Oman's Vision 2040 for higher education.

In this context, Dr. Maha Kobeil, Dean and CEO of Majan University College, expressed her pride in this achievement and extended her gratitude to the Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and the evaluation committee for their diligent efforts. She emphasised that this reaccreditation serves as a testament to the College's ongoing commitment to maintaining high academic standards and quality assurance over the years, in all its systems, procedures, and policies.

Professor Salam Al Kindi, Chairman of the Board of Majan University College, praised this achievement, attributing it to the efforts of the College's staff in their various roles and specialisations. He acknowledged that everyone contributed with professionalism and quality, leading to this accomplishment that the College is rightly proud of. Professor Al Kindi extended his thanks and appreciation to all who contributed to this success, specifically thanking Dr. Maha Kobeil, Dean of the College, Ms. Nabila Al Macki, Deputy Dean for Academic Affairs, and all MUC staff.

He also thanked the Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education for their continuous efforts to ensure the quality of education in the Sultanate. It is worth noting that Majan University College is the first private higher education institution in the Sultanate, offering degrees in three broad spheres: Business Management, Information Technology, and English Language Studies. These areas encompass a wide range of academic programs and pathways, and the College offers Master's, Bachelor's and Diploma degrees in these fields. Recently, new programmes have been added in Postgraduate Centre, and Faculties of Business Management and Information Technology, including the Master of Business Administration taught in Arabic, as well as Diploma and Bachelor's programmes in Finance and Technology, Business Analytics using Artificial Intelligence, and Data Science with specialisations in Cybersecurity and Digital Archiving.

The College is committed to graduating students who are equipped to meet the demands of the local, regional, and global job markets, instilling in them the values that the College seeks to impart, such as excellence, integrity, creativity, teamwork, and inclusiveness, in a learning environment that supports students and educational goals, allowing them to discover their abilities and skills in a rapidly changing world. This aligns with Oman's Vision 2040, which acknowledges higher education as a key pillar for achieving sustainable development and economic and social prosperity in the Sultanate. Majan University College congratulates its students and graduates and reaffirms its commitment to maintaining high academic standards.

Advertorial

Sayyid Badr discusses expanding ties with Bulgarian counterpart

Muscat - H E Sayyid Badr Hamad al Busaidi, Foreign Minister, had a telephonic conversation with Ivan Kondov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, on Monday.

During the conversation, the ministers discussed bilateral relations and means of expanding cooperation between the two friendly countries. They expressed a common desire to advance their mutual gains diplomatically, culturally and economically in the fields of energy and transport. They exchanged views on regional and international developments and agreed to continue consultation and cooperation either through bilateral communication or multilateral meetings.

The ministers pledged to back efforts to ease the ongoing escalation in the region for peace.

NEW VISA MEDICAL SYSTEM "IGRA"

NOW AVAILABLE SAT - THU 8:00 AM-10:30 PM

SCAN FOR LOCATION

SCAN TO WHATSAPP

قسم الفيزياء - فيزياء الفيزياء
Opp. Bank Muscat, Ghubra roundabout

For Report, kindly Whatsapp us

MOH NO. - 1640238/24 2200 4040 9551 0632 9241 3639

WE EXCHANGE TRUST

WORLD WIDE REMITTANCE

PURSHOTTAM KANJI EXCHANGE

شركة برشوتم كانجي للمصارف

Download & NOW! +968-91787029 | 99847299 www.pkeexchange.com

WE BUY & SELL GOLD & SILVER

1 gm to 1kg 24ct gold bars available at best international rate.

MARKET WATCH	
MSX30	4,771.78
Sensex	82,559.84
FOREX RATES (RO1 equals)	
India	217.97
Pakistan	723.77
Bangladesh	310.35
Philippines	146.80
Sri Lanka	776.46
*Rates as on September 02 Source: xe.com	

BRIEFS

Saudi Arabia's date exports grow by 9.9% in H1 2024

Saudi Arabia recorded a 9.9% rise in date exports in the first half of 2024 compared to the same period in 2023, Saudi Press Agency (SPA) reported.

According to the National Centre for Palms and Dates, the kingdom exported more than SAR751mn worth of dates in the first six months of this year, while the value of exports in the same period last year was SAR683mn.

Saudi Arabia's exports to Brazil, Norway, Italy, and Canada in the first half of 2024 grew by over 100%. The kingdom's exports to Germany, exports registered a 91.5% increase, to Korea 72%, to Indonesia 50.1%, to Sweden 43.7%, to Malaysia 32.6%, to the UK 29.7%, to Morocco 25.3%, and to the US 21.1%.

Bank lending in Oman grows 3.8% in H1; deposits jump 11.6%

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Total outstanding credit extended by Oman's banking sector, including both conventional and Islamic banks, grew by 3.8% year-on-year to reach RO31.4bn as of June 2024, according to the statistics released by the Central Bank of Oman (CBO).

Within this total, bank credit to the private sector increased by 3.4% to RO26.3bn. Non-financial corporations received the largest share of private sector credit at 45.2% as of the end of June 2024, followed closely by the household sector at 44.8%. Financial corporations accounted for 6.4%, while other sectors received the remaining 3.6% of private sector credit.

Conventional banks' total outstanding credit grew by 2.3% year-on-year in June 2024, as per the data given in the CBO's monthly statistical bulletin.

Credit to the private sector by conventional banks rose by 1.6% to RO20.5bn, while their overall investments in securities increased significantly by 22.4% to RO5.6bn, according to the data.

However, banks' investment in government development

Total assets of Islamic banks and windows in Oman increased by 11.4% year-on-year to RO7.8bn by the end of June 2024, accounting for 18.1% of the total banking system assets



bonds decreased by 8.3% year-on-year to RO1.9bn in June, while their investments in foreign securities surged by 67.9% to RO2.2bn.

On the other hand, total deposits in Oman's banking sector grew by 11.6% to RO30.7bn as of June 2024, compared to the same period the previous year.

Private sector deposits in-

creased by 14.8% to RO20.7bn. The household sector contributed the most to private sector deposits at 51.8%, followed by non-financial corporations at 29.6%, financial corporations at 15.6%, and other sectors at 2.9%.

Deposits held with conventional banks grew by 10.9% year-on-year to RO24.7bn as of June

2024. Private sector deposits, which made up 66.8% of total deposits with conventional banks, increased by 11.5% to RO16.5bn.

Government deposits with conventional banks slightly decreased by 0.9% to RO5.3bn, while deposits of public enterprises increased by 12.1% to RO1.8bn.

Islamic banking assets reach RO7.8bn

The total assets of Islamic banks and windows in Oman increased by 11.4% year-on-year, reaching RO7.8bn by the end of June 2024. Islamic assets now constitute approximately 18.1% of the total banking system assets in Oman as of the end of June 2024.

Islamic banking entities provided financing amounting to RO6.4bn at the end of June 2024, reflecting a growth of 10.4% compared to the previous year. Total deposits held with Islamic banks and windows increased by 14.7% to RO6bn.

Interest rates rise

Interest rates in Oman saw a slight increase during the first half of this year. According to CBO data, the weighted average interest rate on Omani rial deposits with conventional banks rose from 2.313% at the end of June 2023 to 2.651% by the end of June 2024, while the weighted average lending rate increased from 5.434% to 5.581% over the same period.

Meanwhile, the overnight Omani rial domestic inter-bank lending rate increased to 5.402% in June 2024, up from 5.350% a year earlier.

'This rise in the domestic inter-bank lending rate is a result of the increase in the average repo rate for liquidity injection by the CBO, which moved to 6.00% from 5.750% a year ago, following the US Federal Reserve rate hikes,' the CBO stated in its bulletin.

Profits of GCC listed companies rise 5.7% to \$60.7bn in second quarter

Abu Dhabi, UAE - Aggregate net profits reported by companies listed on GCC exchanges witnessed a healthy year-on-year growth of 5.7% during Q2 2024 led by a broad-based growth across most markets in the region.

Kamco Investment Company, a regional non-banking financial powerhouse headquartered in Kuwait, in its latest report, stated that the quarter-on-quarter growth came in at 8.1% with total net profits up for the second consecutive quarter to reach \$60.7bn during Q2-2024 as compared to \$56.2bn in Q12024 and \$57.4bn in Q2 2023.

At the regional level, Dubai reported the second-biggest year-on-year growth in profits (after Bahrain) at 30.9% reaching \$6.7bn during Q2 2024 mainly related to accounting adjustments and restructuring implemented by DSI.

According to the report, companies in Bahrain also reported double-digit year-on-year growth in profits during the quar-



ter followed by low to mid-single digit profit growth for the rest of the GCC countries. The growth in profits also highlighted a broad-based double-digit increase in profits for most sectors in the GCC.

Key sectors like banks and telecom posted profit growth of 10.8% and 15.8%, respectively, while materials and real estate sectors showed even stronger growth of 45.6% and 23.9%

growth, respectively. The 68.3% profit growth for the capital goods sector reflected the accounting adjustments related to DSI.

In terms of H1 2024 performance, net profits for GCC listed corporates was almost flat with a marginal increase of 0.1% to reach \$116.9bn as compared to \$116.8bn during H1 2023.

The flattish growth reflected mixed trend at the country level

with Saudi and Abu Dhabi listed entities reporting a decline in net profits by 2.7% and 2.2%, respectively, which was completely offset by higher total profits for the rest of the country aggregates.

The report concluded that the aggregate for Dubai once again showed the biggest year-on-year growth of 20.0% during first half of 2024.

WAM

Oil prices continue to slide amid Gaza ceasefire attempts

London, UK - Oil prices decreased on Monday amid a growing desire to achieve a ceasefire in the Middle East, home to a vast majority of global oil reserves, by easing supply concerns.

International benchmark Brent crude decreased 0.4% to \$76.64 per barrel in morning trade in London, up from the previous session's close of \$76.93.

US benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) fell by 0.6% to \$73.12 per barrel, after closing at \$73.55 in the prior session.

After hitting \$80.20 following the declaration of the eastern-based Libyan government, headed by Osama Hammad, to suspend oil production in the country on August 26, prices failed to reach this level in the past four sessions and remained below \$80.

The reason for this decline was the prospect of a ceasefire in the Middle East, which alleviated supply concerns in the markets by supporting downward price movements.

A nationwide strike swept across Israel on Monday, intensifying pressure on Prime Minister



Benjamin Netanyahu to reach an immediate ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal with the Palestinian group Hamas.

The General Organization of Workers, Histadrut, initiated the strike to amplify public outcry for the release of hostages held in Gaza. According to Israel's public broadcaster, KAN, the strike has spread rapidly across the country after massive protests the previ-

ous evening.

Nearly 770,000 Israelis took to the streets in cities such as Tel Aviv, demanding immediate government action.

Expectations that these developments will increase the possibility of a ceasefire in the region are effective in the decline of prices by easing supply concerns in the markets.

Agencies

LNG supplies to Europe hit lowest level in three years

Moscow, Russia - LNG supplies from European terminals to the EU's gas transport system fell sharply in August 2024, having reached the lowest level since October 2021, according to data provided by Gas Infrastructure Europe (GIE).

Last month such LNG supplies amounted to 7.16bn cubic meters, down by 12% compared with July, and down by 26% compared with last August. This is the lowest level since October 2021.

LNG supplies from terminals to Europe's gas transport

system have reached around 73.9bn cubic meters since the beginning of 2024, which is 17% lower than in the same period last year.

Second come supplies from North Sea, mainly Norway's gas (32%) followed by withdrawal from the East, which includes Russian gas, gas supplies from Ukraine, as well as withdrawal by European companies of their gas from Ukraine's UGS facilities (12%). This is higher than supplies from the UK (5%) and North Africa (11%).

TASS

Dubai's DP World acquires Cargo Services Far East

Dubai, UAE - Dubai-based global port operator DP World has completed the acquisition of Cargo Services Far East Ltd, a global supply chain provider headquartered in Hong Kong. The acquisition process is officially complete, with plans for full integration over the next few months.

The combined team will put together all required resources to ensure a smooth integration process, prioritising operational continuity and delivering to meet customers' needs.

Cargo Services is a market leader in origin services - moving goods from the factory floor to the customer's door. It employs



over 2,500 people in Greater China and across Asia, Europe, South Africa and the US.

With this significant milestone, DP World now has more than 115,000 employees spread

over 800 locations globally. By the end of the year, it will operate more than 200 freight forwarding offices, covering up to 95% of global trade flows.

Founded in 1989, Cargo Ser-

vices was one of the earliest foreign logistics service providers to enter the China market.

Over the decades, it has established an extensive portfolio of solutions such as origin purchase order management, ocean freight, air freight and warehousing for a diverse range of sectors. This includes sophisticated supply chain management services for retail and high-fashion customers in the US, UK, Europe, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. It has also expanded its portfolio to provide specialised cruise logistics services globally.

Industries such as automotive, chemicals, healthcare, perishables, retail and technology re-

quire tailored logistics solutions. DP World is strategically focused on creating specialised offerings that address each sector's specific challenges and opportunities.

The goal is to provide comprehensive, sector-specific solutions that drive efficiency, innovation, and growth.

Sultan Ahmed bin Sulayem, Group Chairman and CEO of DP World, said, "Cargo Services' logistics expertise and global network perfectly complement our own footprint, and will be yet another tool in our offering to customers. Together, we'll create a powerful force propelling trade globally."

WAM



US consumer sentiment rises in August after 4 months decline

New York, US – US consumer sentiment rose in August after falling for four consecutive months, according to final results from the University of Michigan's consumer survey.

The index of consumer sentiment rose 1.5 points to 67.9 in August, from 66.4 in July. The market expectation for the index was to come in at 67.8.

Consumers' long-term expectations are 10% higher in August than they were in July. Sentiment is 36% above its all-time low in June 2022, when inflation spiked to 9.1%. Even so, almost half of all survey respondents (47%) said high prices were eroding their personal finances.

"Consumers' short- and long-run economic outlook improved, with both figures reaching their most favourable levels since April 2024 and a particularly sizable 10% improvement for long-run expectations that was seen across age and income groups," Surveys of Consumers Director Joanne Hsu said in a state-

ment.

Hsu said Democrats exhibited a large 10% increase in sentiment, while Republicans posted an equally sized decline.

"These patterns resulted from a sea change in election expectations in August with Kamala Harris emerging as the Democratic candidate for president," she said.

In July, 51% of consumers said they expected former President Donald Trump to win the election in November compared with 37% who thought so for Biden. With Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic presidential nominee, 54% now expect Harris to win with 36% expecting Trump to be reelected.

"In August, election expectations flipped; 36% expected Trump to win compared with 54% for Harris," Joanne Hsu said. She noted that consumer expectations are subject to change in the months leading up to Election Day.

Agencies

Global shipments of iPhone reach 1.6bn units since launch

New York, US – Apple has reached a remarkable milestone, with global shipments of its iPhones have exceeded 1.6bn units since the device's debut in 2007, according to Stocklytics.com.

Stocklytics.com's financial analyst, Edith Reads, said, "Apple has released many iPhone models, each bringing enhancements like AI features, a Retina display, and advanced cameras. These innovations have set industry benchmarks and kept consumer interest high, driving impressive shipment figures."

In its first year on the market, Apple sold over 1.4mn iPhones. By 2008, the company had shipped more than 8mn units; by 2010, shipments soared to 24mn units. Between 2007 and 2010, Apple experienced an astounding 1,614% increase in iPhone shipments, highlighting the device's significant impact on both consumers and the company's early growth.

The momentum continued, with iPhone shipments rapidly escalating to 51mn units in 2012 and reaching 88mn units in 2014, a 73% increase in just two years. By 2015, Apple had shipped its first 100mn units, with approximately 101mn iPhones sold that year alone. This marked the beginning of a new era, with Apple selling hundreds of millions of iPhones annually in the following years.

In 2023, the company closed with over 153mn units sold, its highest yearly sale yet. However, in 2024, Apple sold only 50.1mn iPhones in its first quarter, a 38%



In 2024, Apple's market shares in China fell, with competitors eating into its standings. Local rivals, including Xiaomi and Vivo, gained significantly, putting pressure on Apple's iPhone sales

drop from the previous quarter. Moreover, in the second quarter of this year, the company's iPhone shipments slumped, recording only 45.7mn units, an almost 9% drop from the first quarter.

iPhone sales drop in 2024

Early into 2024, Apple's market shares in China fell, with competitors eating into its standings.

Local rivals, including Xiaomi and Vivo, gained significantly, putting pressure on Apple.

In the second quarter of 2024, Xiaomi shipped 42.3mn units, and Vivo sold 25.9mn smartphones, with their respective market shares growing to 14.8% and 9.1%, challenging Apple's 15.8%. Additionally, Oppo sold over 25.8mn smartphones in the second quarter, bringing its global market shares to 9.0%.

Nabila Popal, senior research director with IDC's Worldwide Tracker team, commented on the growing smartphone competition, saying "While recovery is well underway with the top five companies all making year-over-year gains, we are seeing increasing competition amongst the leaders and polarisation of price bands. As Apple and Samsung continue to push the top of the market and benefit the most from

the ongoing premiumisation trend, many leading Chinese players are increasing shipments in the low-end to capture volume share amidst weak demand. As a result, the share of mid-range devices is challenged."

Furthermore, Apple's iPhone sales in China plummeted following the Chinese government ban on its devices in some of its workplaces. The government expanded the prohibition of iPhones to local government workers and state-owned companies to counter its reliance on US tech, which heavily affected iPhone sales.

EU electric car sales stall as Germany records sharp decline in registrations

Indrabati Lahiri

Electric car registrations for the European Union in July saw a fall of 10.8%, according to newly released figures from the European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA).

A total of 102,705 electric cars were sold in July, with the market share falling to 12.1% compared with 13.5% for the same month last year.

European Union passenger car registration numbers for July rose 0.2% year-on-year to 852,051 units, the ACEA revealed. It was the second consecutive month of growth although a much smaller rise than the 4.3% increase seen in June.

For the seven months until the end of July, car registrations increased 3.9% year-on-year to a total of more than 6.5mn sales, with electric car registrations accounting for 12.5% of the total market share.

The main countries driving



growth in July were Spain, which saw a 3.4% increase in registrations and Italy, with a 4.7% rise. Car registrations in Germany were down 2.1%, and 2.3% in France.

Sales of electric cars have dropped off particularly in Germany as government financial in-

centives for electric vehicles slowed down. Consumers are also spending less amid fears of problems with the economy.

Germany saw electric vehicle registrations plunged by 36.8% in July. One reason for the drop in sales in Germany was because government financial incentives

for EV vehicle purchases have slowed down, meaning the cost of the cars remains too high for many buyers.

Conversely, the Netherlands recorded an 8.9% increase in electric vehicle registrations, whereas Belgium revealed that EV registrations soared 44.2% in

July. France also experienced electric car registrations inch up 1%.

However, these countries' improvements in EV registrations were still not enough to make up for Germany's performance.

For the first seven months of the year, 815,399 new electric cars were registered in Europe.

Following the same trend, plug-in hybrid car sales in Europe also saw a drop of 14.1% in July, although Germany did record a 3.2% boost. Plug-in hybrid cars made up 6.8% of the overall automotive market in July 2024, selling 57,679 units. This was a slight fall from the 7.9% market share last July.

Hybrid-electric cars sales also increase 25.7% in July, with approximately 273,003 units sold. Spain experienced a rise of 31.5% in hybrid-electric cars, whereas Italy recorded a 17.4% hike. Germany revealed a 22.4% increase, while hybrid-electric car sales surged 47.4% in France.

(Source: Euronews.com)

Adani Ports buys 80% stake in Astro Offshore for \$185mn

Ahmedabad, India – India's Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (SEZ) has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 80% stake in Astro Offshore, the Adani Group company said in a statement.

Incorporated in 2009, Astro is a leading global offshore supply vessel (OSV) operator in the Middle East, India, Far East Asia, and Africa.

The Adani Group statement said the acquisition was in an all-cash deal for \$185mn. The transaction is expected to be "value accretive" from the first year itself.

According to the Adani Group statement, Astro owns a fleet of 26 OSVs comprising of anchor handling tugs, flat top barges, multipurpose support vessels, and workboats and provides vessel management and complementary services.

"Astro's deep experience in supporting the construction and maintenance of offshore platforms, oil and gas fields, and subsea facilities allows it to deliver cutting-edge services to clients in the offshore exploration and drilling markets," Adani Ports and SEZ said.

Ashwani Gupta, CEO of Adani Ports and SEZ, said Astro's acquisition is part of its roadmap to becoming one of the world's largest marine operators.

"Astro will add 26 OSVs to our current fleet of 142 tugs



Astro's acquisition is part of Adani Ports and SEZ's roadmap to becoming one of the world's largest marine operators

ASHWANI GUPTA

and dredgers, taking the total count to 168. The acquisition will also give us access to an impressive roster of Tier-1 customers while further consolidating our footprint across the Arabian Gulf, the Indian sub-continent and Far East Asia. We look forward to working closely with Astro's leadership team and scaling up the current platform," said Gupta.

Mark Humphreys, Managing Director, Astro Offshore believes that two the entities together will be able to accelerate growth to add further scale and diversity to the fleet, expand the geographical footprint, and deliver more end-to-end solutions to customers.

ANI

China planning to build unified national market: Regulator

Beijing, China – China will speed up the building of a unified national market that is efficient, rule-based, fair and open, Luo Wen, Head of the State Administration for Market Regulation, has said.

The country will formulate and revise rules for the implementation of the regulations for fair competition reviews, improve legal rules for determining market monopoly and unfair competition, and refine rules for fair competition in the digital economy, Luo



Luo Wen

said in an interview with Xinhua.

He said policies and measures that impede the building of a unified national market and fair competition will be reviewed.

Strong efforts will be made to promote the inclusion of the review of fair competition in the assessment and evaluation of building a law-based government and optimizing the business environment, said Luo.

The administration will intensify efforts to address issues re-

lated to regional protectionist practices and market segmentation to ensure fair competition and market order, and promote fair and unified enterprise credit evaluation, he said.

Acts that abuse administrative powers to exclude or restrict competition will be prohibited and business entities of all kinds will be guided to compete in an orderly manner, said Luo.

To promote fair and unified market regulation, efforts will be

made to strengthen the standardisation and digital construction of market regulation and to build big data centers for market supervision, he said.

Noting the importance and urgency of improving the basic system of market economy, Luo said efforts will be made to improve market access and exit system, establish a trade secret protection system, and improve the credit supervision system.

Xinhua

Bank Muscat coordinates greening of Wadi Naheez team's pitch in Salalah

In line with its ongoing achievements and success, Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman, continues to excel in the field of social responsibility through development of national teams and support to Omani youth.

Recently, the bank participated in the celebration of the completion of the synthetic turf project for the Wadi Naheez team in Salalah, under Dhofar governorate, as part of its Green Sports programme.

This initiative is designed to support local sports teams and enhance Oman's sports infrastructure. The event was patronised by Mohammad bin Hassan al Ansi al Yafai, member of the Shura Council and the representative of the wilayat of Salalah; Ahmed bin Suhail al Amri, regional manager of Bank Muscat Branches, Dhofar; in presence of Ahmed bin Suhail Qattan, head of the Wadi Naheez Team; along with a number of regional executive officials of the bank, guests and team members.

During the ceremony, Ahmed al Amri delivered a speech expressing delight at the project's



inauguration. He emphasised that Bank Muscat's efforts are focused on providing sustainable sports infrastructure in Oman, benefiting the nation's youth and enabling various sports and cultural activities.

Amri also congratulated the team members on the successful completion of the project.

"In recent years, Bank Muscat has successfully implemented several projects, including lighting, natural and synthetic turf, and water desalination initiatives, for various local sports teams across different wilayats and governorates," the regional manager further remarked.

"These efforts aim to enhance Oman's sports infrastructure and promote green landscapes



throughout the country. We are extremely proud of the programme's success since its launch in 2012 and the strong competition among eligible teams to benefit from the funding it provides."

Ahmed Qattan, Head of the

Wadi Naheez Team, expressed his deep appreciation for Bank Muscat and its unwavering support for Omani youth. "Bank Muscat is committed to supporting sports teams and fostering the development of youth talents and potential. The 'Green Sports'

programme is an exemplary initiative that significantly contributes to the advancement of national sports teams and the enhancement of sports infrastructure," he said.

"From our side, the team management is dedicated to

maintaining the project and leveraging it to organise various tournaments and activities," Qattan assured.

He asserted that these events not only showcase the diverse talents of young people but also facilitate the organisation of so-

cial gatherings on the newly prepared ground, benefiting both our team members and other teams in the governorate. "I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to Bank Muscat for their efforts and collaboration in supporting sports teams and promoting the concept of social responsibility among private sector companies and institutions at large."

The Green Sports programme by Bank Muscat is recognised as a sustainable social responsibility initiative aimed at promoting the values of entrepreneurship and partnership while empowering the community by supporting talented Omani youth at both sporting and cultural levels.

The programme also plays a crucial role in enhancing the contributions of national sports and cultural teams by developing sports stadium infrastructure. Bank Muscat opens registration for the programme annually, and since its inception in 2012, it has benefited 183 teams, reaching around 50,000 members.

Bank Muscat remains committed to ongoing collaboration and partnership with all teams to ensure the successful completion of projects in their final form.



National Finance champions 'youth entrepreneurship' at Injaz Oman event

National Finance, the Sultanate of Oman's leading finance company, partnered with Injaz Oman to honour the winners of 'The Company' 2024 competition at a prestigious ceremony.

This event celebrated the remarkable achievements of the participants, highlighting the exceptional entrepreneurial spirit, ingenuity, and potential of Omani youth. National Finance's collaboration with Injaz Oman highlights the company's commitment to supporting initiatives that foster learning and growth among the youth, equipping the next generation of leaders with

the skills necessary to drive the nation's ongoing socio-economic development.

Injaz Oman's 'The Company' programme and competition provides a platform for secondary school, high school, and university students to channel their ambitions, offering them practical knowledge on launching and managing successful businesses.

Through this programme, participants gain valuable insights into organisational and operational procedures, the challenges and rewards of entrepreneurship, and key business functions.

This comprehensive approach empowers students from diverse backgrounds to realize their aspirations, thereby making a meaningful impact on their communities.

National Finance played a pivotal role as the Main Sponsor for the University category of the competition, underscoring the company's dedication to empowering the nation's youth.

Commending the young achievers, Tariq Suleiman al Farsi, Chief Executive Officer of National Finance, expressed his pride, stating, "It is our pleasure to witness the entrepreneurial

potential of Omani youth shining brightly at the closing ceremony of the 'Company' programme and the competition 2024.

This event provided a significant platform where innovators came together, collectively shaping the path of the country's economic progress.

"Through our fruitful and long-standing partnership with Injaz Oman, we embody National Finance's unwavering commitment to empowering Omani youth and supporting their entrepreneurial ideas, in alignment with Oman Vision 2040," Farsi noted.

MoE delegation takes part in 4th WCPE in Poland

The Ministry of Education (MoE), represented by the Directorate-General of Educational Supervision, took part in the 4th World Conference on Physics Education (4th WCPE), held in Kraków, Poland, from August 26 to 30.

The 4th WCPE - held under the title 'Embracing Changes Together' - was organised by the Faculty of Physics, Astronomy and Applied Computer Science, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland, in cooperation with the International Research Group on Physics Teaching (GIREP vzw), the International Conference on Physics Education (ICPE), and the Faculty of Physics and Astronomy, University of Wrocław, Poland.

The Omani delegation included six of the senior supervisors from the ministry's General Diwan, and supervisors and teachers from the educational directorates in the governorates of Dhahirah, South Batinah, Buraimi, and North Sharqiyah, from the field of teaching physics.

The conference targeted different categories of those interested in teaching physics,



starting from the primary stage to researchers in the doctoral stage, held at Jagiellonian University in Kraków.

The conference included several topics: physics curricula, competency-based education, teaching and learning its concepts, multimedia, augmented reality, virtual reality and technology, distance education, experiments and practical performance in teaching physics, evaluating student learning, preparing its teachers and their professional growth, its role in environmental and societal issues, contemporary physics in

schools and universities, in STEM education, identity and belonging, community work and physics. The conference includes main sessions, workshops, and scientific posters in physics.

It was held to bring together those interested in physics education from different educational levels from different countries of the world to discuss the different trends, developments, and challenges related to physics education in the fast-paced world to reach a common and broader understanding of the education of young people and society in general.

ISD hosts 'Mon Avis' inter-school debate to celebrate youth voices

Indian School Darsait (ISD) proudly hosted the 'Mon Avis' Inter-School Debate Competition for the Ambassador's Rolling Trophy on Thursday (August 29), under the aegis of the Board of Directors, Indian Schools Oman.

The event took place at the Senior School Auditorium, bringing together some of the brightest young minds from across various Indian schools in Oman for an inspiring exchange of ideas, a release stated.

This highly anticipated event featured thirty-two participants from sixteen Indian Schools across Oman, all competing for the prestigious Ambassador's Rolling Trophy, which was ultimately won by the outstanding team from Indian School Salalah. 'Mon Avis' has firmly estab-



lished itself as a cornerstone of intellectual engagement among Indian schools in Oman. Conceptualised to commemorate the International Day of Peace, this event not only highlights the power of dialogue but also un-

derscores the significance of peaceful discourse in our increasingly complex world.

The valedictory function was graced by the presence of H E Amit Narang, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman,

as the chief guest.

Distinguished guests included Dr Sivakumar Manickam, Chairman, Board of Directors, Indian Schools Oman; Pardeep Kumar, Head of Chancery, Embassy of India; M P Vinoba, Senior Princi-

pal and Education Advisor, Board of Directors, Indian Schools Oman; Vijaya Saravanan Sankaran, President, School Management Committee, Indian School Darsait; along with other members of the school manage-

ment committee and invited dignitaries.

The debate centred on the thought-provoking motion, 'Social Media Obsession Impacts Teenagers' Mental Health', with participants delivering persua-

sive arguments both for and against the motion. A distinguished panel of judges - George Thomas, Govind Negi, and Saiju Victor - had the challenging task of evaluating the participants.

The team from Indian School Salalah, represented by Hamna Nishthar and Zaina Fathima, emerged victorious, claiming the coveted Ambassador's Rolling Trophy.

Among the individual accolades, Brijesh Chowdary Mupparaju of Indian School Al Ghubra received awards for Best Speaker and Best Rebuttal Speaker. Zaina Fathima of Indian School Salalah was the first runner-up, and Tanishka Goel of Indian School Nizwa was the second runner-up. All other participants were recognised with certificates of participation.

Sea Traditions Committees play major role in fishing sector's development

Sea Traditions Committees in Muscat Governorate are playing effective roles in Omani maritime heritage's preservation and the fishing sector development.

Through their participation in formulation of decisions and resolution of disputes, these committees contribute to guaranteeing sustainability of the fisheries and improving the fishermen's situations.

They ensure this vital sector's sustainability, a release stated.

There are 30 fishing committees in the coastal wilayats of the Sultanate of Oman. Five of them are in the Muscat Governorate, in Muscat, Muttrah, Quriyat, Seeb and Bawshar.

On the committees' effective role, Yasser bin Saud al Zadjali, the Municipal Council member and Quriyat representative, said that the Sea Traditions Committees are considered the link between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources and the fishermen society to form an effective partnership to regulate fishing according to the ethnicities and agree disputes that may occur between fishermen.

"During these committees' periodic meetings, the challenges and problems facing the fishing sector are discussed and recommendations and proposals are made to counter those challenges and sustain fisheries."

Membership standards

Engineer Issa bin Mohammed al Rawahi, manager of the Fisheries Development Department in Muscat, said according to the ministerial decision related to the Sea Traditions Committees' list, each coastal wilayat's wali chairs its sea traditions committee, and these committees are reconsti-



Yasser bin Saud al Zadjali



Issa bin Mohammed al Rawahi



These committees are a link between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources and the fishermen's society

tuted every four years.

Individual committee consists of the municipal council member chosen by the wali based on his experience in sea ethnicities, the Fisheries or Fish Development Departments' manager, fishermen with legal fishing licences, a representative of fisheries-related activities having a licence, and an ROP Coast Guard Command officer or police station officer if the Coast Guard is not present.

Membership period

The ministerial decision relating to the regulation of sea traditions

committees specified the term of their membership to be four years starting from the date of issue of the ministerial decision to form them.

A member cannot run for more than two consecutive sessions unless two full terms have passed since his membership's end. Applicants from fishermen and workers in fisheries sector are required to have familiarity with the sea ethnicities, it is preferable for them to be able to read and write, they have professional experience in fishing or related activities, and have a wish to volunteer.



An applicant's age must be between 30 and 75 years, and he must be a full-time employee in the profession, and must not have been convicted of the fishing law violation or any honour crime.

For his part, Zadjali indicated that the Sea Traditions Committee in Quriyat is holding its meetings in the wali's office under the chairmanship of Quriyat wali, in the attendance of ROP Coast Guard Command officer, the municipal council member, the committee members, and the Fisheries Development Department manager, who is the com-

mittee's rapporteur, where the topics, demands related to the fisheries sector and development projects in the wilayat are discussed.

Specialisations, roles

The Sea Traditions Committees have various functions, including proposals and recommendations' submission to develop fisheries, an opinion expression on relevant laws and regulations, and disputes' solution between fishermen according to local laws and ethnicities.

These committees work to improve services for the fisheries

sector, support fishing traps' supervision, and enhance the efficiency of fishing ports and landing sites' operation. They also support efforts to keep alive the traditional fishing profession, submit proposals to develop the fishing fleet and infrastructure, and enhance fish marketing by cooperation with fishermen and traders. Additionally, the committee participates in events and activities related to the fishing sector.

Achievements

Rawahi stated that fishery statistics in 2023 showed an increase

in fish production in Muscat Governorate by 28% compared to the previous year. There are 2,708 artisanal fishing boats and three wooden ships. The small sal, sahwa and queen fish are the most valued species when it comes to fishing.

Rawahi added that the Sea Traditions Committee in Muscat achieved a notable milestone by reviewing the Haramil port construction, while the committee in Muttrah reviewed a tender for Aint Darsait Port.

The Bawshar committee is submitting a proposal to fishermen to establish a new port.

Asyad Express supports SMEs' growth through e-commerce solutions

Asyad Express, part of Asyad Group, is revolutionizing the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Oman through cutting-edge e-commerce solutions.

Spanning an impressive 5,700sqm, its state-of-the-art e-Fulfillment Centre has been designed to help SMEs streamline operations and double their business volumes by providing essential logistics support in today's competitive e-commerce landscape.

The centre offers a comprehensive suite of services that

optimise the fulfillment process, from efficient goods reception to precise inventory management. A key feature of this centre is its ability to handle incoming products with exceptional speed and accuracy, ensuring that each item undergoes rigorous inspection to meet high-quality standards before being stored using advanced inventory tracking systems. This approach provides SMEs with the confidence and peace of mind needed to scale their operations effectively.

With prompt and precise

picking, packing, and shipping processes that guarantee timely delivery, Asyad Express provides both domestic and international shipping options, ensuring that products reach customers' doorsteps worldwide within 24-72 hours to over 220 destinations.

Furthermore, Asyad Express acts as a payment collector for businesses, efficiently transferring funds from customers directly to company bank accounts. By offering these services, Asyad Express helps companies cut down on their

operational expenses.

With the in-house customs clearance, Asyad Express minimises the dwell time of shipments, enabling quicker delivery of goods. This process enhances the overall shipping experience, while real-time shipment tracking allows customers to monitor their orders at every stage, enhancing transparency and trust between businesses and their clientele.

Asyad Express is dedicated to helping SMEs streamline their operations and achieve their business goals.



Crowne Plaza Muscat presents 'Big Chill Brunch' every Friday

Every Friday, Crowne Plaza Muscat OCEC is laying out its highly popular Big Chill Brunch, a weekly event designed to provide the perfect blend of entertainment, fun, games, and an exceptional culinary spread.

'Make your Fridays unforgettable with this vibrant and engaging brunch experience,' the hotel management stated.

Big Chill Brunch

The Big Chill Brunch at Crowne Plaza Muscat OCEC is more than just a meal - it's a full-fledged experience designed to entertain and delight guests of all ages.

'Each Friday, the brunch features a dynamic mix of activities, live entertainment, and interactive games, ensuring there's something for everyone,' the hotel declared in a statement.

From fresh seafood and gourmet salads to sizzling grills and decadent sweets, the Big Chill Brunch promises to satisfy every palate

Entertainment and activities

Guests can enjoy live music performances that create the perfect ambiance for a leisurely Friday afternoon.

'Our entertainment lineup includes talented local artists and DJs who keep the vibe lively and engaging. For those looking for a bit of friendly competition, a variety of interactive games and activities are available,' the hotel

stated. 'Additionally, we have a dedicated kids activity area, allowing parents to relax and enjoy the brunch experience.'

Culinary Delights

'Our culinary team has curated a spectacular brunch menu that includes an impressive selection of international dishes, live cooking stations, and indulgent desserts,' the statement further added.

From fresh seafood and gourmet salads to sizzling grills and decadent sweets, the Big Chill Brunch promises to satisfy every palate.

Crowne Plaza Muscat OCEC invited people to join them every Friday for the Big Chill Brunch, where good food, great company, and endless entertainment come together for the ultimate Friday experience.



OOMCO celebrates graduation of 2nd batch of 'Experience Hub'

Oman Oil Marketing Company (OOMCO) celebrated the graduation of a second batch from its pioneering 'Experience Hub' programme.

Launched in partnership with the Ministry of Labour in 2022, the initiative was designed to guide new graduates as they embark on their career paths, equip-

ping them with the necessary skillsets and industry know-how to excel and thrive.

It is part of OOMCO's CSR efforts to continue investing in Oman's future by developing a skilled and capable workforce, aligned with the broader objectives of Oman Vision 2040.

"We are very proud to gradu-

ate this new wave of young Omanis who have successfully completed the programme," said Khamis Nasser al Shuaibi, general manager - Shared Services at OOMCO.

"The hands-on experience and valuable insights they have gained will not only stay with them throughout their careers,

enhancing their employability but also empower them to positively contribute to the energy sector and the nation's growth."

The 'Experience Hub' programme offers graduates a comprehensive one-year on-the-job training experience, immersing them in various departments across OOMCO.

All 22 on board killed in Russian helicopter crash near volcano

Moscow, Russia - A helicopter carrying 22 people crashed in the country's Far East, Russia's Emergencies Ministry announced. None of those on board survived, CNN reported, citing Russian state media TASS.

Seventeen bodies of those on board had been found by Sunday evening local time, the ministry said.

The helicopter, which had 19 passengers and three crew members on board, took off near the Vachkazhets volcano on Saturday and was headed to the village of Nikolaevka when it went

down, the governor of the Kamchatka region, Vladimir Solodov, said on Saturday on Telegram after the search began.

"The helicopter had taken off near the region's Vachkazhets volcano, a tourist attraction in the remote Kamchatka Peninsula, and was heading towards the village of Nikolaevka," Solodov said.

On Sunday, Solodov said that the wreckage of the helicopter, an Mi-8, had been found and that 'we are doing everything possible to get specialists to the scene as quickly as we can'.



Rescuers searching the site of a helicopter crash in the Kamchatka Peninsula, Russia on Sunday

A rescue team found the wreckage on Sunday at an altitude of 900 metres, or almost 3,000 feet, not far from where the helicopter's crew had last made contact, Russia's ministry of emergencies said on Telegram.

According to the Ministry, the rescue crew found 17 bodies. The emergency service told the state news agency Tass that, based on the condition of the wreckage, no survivors were expected. Further, the agency posted a photo and video on Telegram that showed shards

of a helicopter lying on the side of a steep hill in a mountainous region.

According to the Kamchatka Department of Hydrometeorology and Environmental Monitoring, fast-changing, harsh, and sub-Arctic weather often buffets the peninsula, and there was fog, drizzle, and poor visibility in the area on Saturday.

In 2021, another Mi-8 helicopter carrying tourists crashed into a deep volcanic crater lake in Kamchatka, killing eight people.

ANI

Far-right German party wins first state election since WWII

The anti-immigrant AfD party managed to win 32.8 per cent of the vote in Thuringia

Berlin, Germany - Germany's far right has won a state election for the first time since World War II, preliminary official results showed on Sunday.

The anti-immigrant Alternative for Germany (AfD) party managed to win 32.8 per cent of the vote in the state of Thuringia, while the centre-right Christian Democrats (CDU) came in second with 23.6 per cent.

The newly formed left-wing populist party Bündnis Sahra Wagenknecht (BSW) came in third by winning 15.8 per cent of the vote.

Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats (SPD) suffered one of their worst election results in the state with just 6.1 per cent. Their coalition partners - the Greens and the liberal Free Democrats - failed to make the five per cent threshold necessary for entry into the state parliament.

Crucially, none of the parties managed to win enough seats in the parliament to be able to form a single party majority government. The far-right AfD is unlikely to come to power despite its election win, as all other parties ruled out any coalition with it.

AfD's Höcke hails 'historic victory'

Radical AfD Thuringia leader Björn Höcke described the vote in his state as a 'historic victory' after exit polls put his party far ahead.



After Sunday's election victory, Thuringia's AfD leader Björn Höcke wants to head his state's government

"This fills me with so, so, so much pride and satisfaction," Höcke told his supporters in Thuringia's state capital, Erfurt.

"We are ready to take government responsibility," he added.

Höcke said his party is willing to invite other political factions for talks about forming a coalition, despite other major parties dismissing this possibility ahead of the vote.

The 52-year-old former history teacher has repeatedly drawn criticism with his statements about Germany's past, including calling a monument to Holocaust victims in Berlin a 'monument of shame'.

In 2019, a German court ruled that Höcke can legally be described as a 'fascist'.

The AfD's co-chairwoman, Alice Weidel, hailed her party's

performance as a 'historical success' and said that voters have punished Scholz's coalition government.

She called on the CDU and other parties to change their stance against the AfD and engage in talks with them to build coalition governments in Thuringia and the neighbouring state of Saxony.

"The voters want to see the

AfD in the government. We are representing around 30 per cent of voters in both federal states. Without us, a stable government is no longer possible," she said.

'Alarming signal for democracy'

The Left Party, which enjoyed significant support in both Thuringia and Saxony in the past, suffered the biggest losses of the night.

Its co-chairwoman, Janine Wissler, said it was a 'bitter election night' for her party, as it saw its support plummet to below 13 per cent in Thuringia from 31 per cent in 2019.

The voters want to see the AfD in the government. We are representing around 30 per cent of voters in both federal states. Without us, a stable government is no longer possible

ALICE WEIDEL

"And for the first time since the end of the Nazi era, a fascist party has become the strongest group in the state parliament. This is of course an alarming signal," she told public broadcaster ARD.

CDU wins close race in Saxony

In Saxony, the AfD also managed to increase its vote share. However, it came in second place behind the Christian Democrats by a slim margin.

The centre-right CDU won a narrow victory with 31.9 per cent of the vote, while the AfD got 30.6 per cent, according to the preliminary official results.

Sahra Wagenknecht's left-wing BSW party secured third place by winning 11.8 per cent of the vote.

Agencies

South Korea launches Telegram deepfake porn probe

Seoul, South Korea - South Korea's National Police Agency (KNPA) announced on Monday that they were investigating the encrypted messaging app Telegram. They suspect the platform of 'abetting' the distribution of AI-generated pornography, also called deepfake porn, including images of teenagers.

Deepfake pornography involves superimposing the face of a real person on an AI-created body. Last month, a South Korean broadcaster ran a story exposing a Telegram chatroom run by university students sharing deepfake pornographic material of female classmates.

This was just one several high-profile cases in the country that has caused public outrage.

"In light of these crimes, the Seoul National Police Agency launched their probe last week... for abetting the crimes," KNPA investigations chief Woo Jong-soo told reporters.

"Telegram has been non-responsive to our previous requests for account information during investigations of earlier Telegram-linked crimes," he added.

DW



Pope Francis, 87, will first head to Indonesia

Pope Francis begins 12-day marathon Asia-Pacific journey

Vatican City - Pope Francis begins the foreign trip of his papacy on Monday, a 12-day journey to four countries in Southeast Asia and Oceania.

Francis, 87, will first head to Indonesia. Despite being the most populous Muslim-majority country in the world, Indonesia is also home to 8.6mn Catholics.

He will then travel to Papua New Guinea, East Timor, and Singapore. Of all the stops, only East Timor is a most of the population Catholic.

This is Francis' first major trip abroad this year. Health issues have prevented the pontiff, who now often uses a wheelchair, from more extensive international travel in recent years.

The trip was originally scheduled for 2020, but had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This trip, combined with last year's visit to Mongolia, highlights the growing importance of Asia and Oceania to the Catholic Church.

DW

Xi hosts regional leaders ahead of China-Africa meet

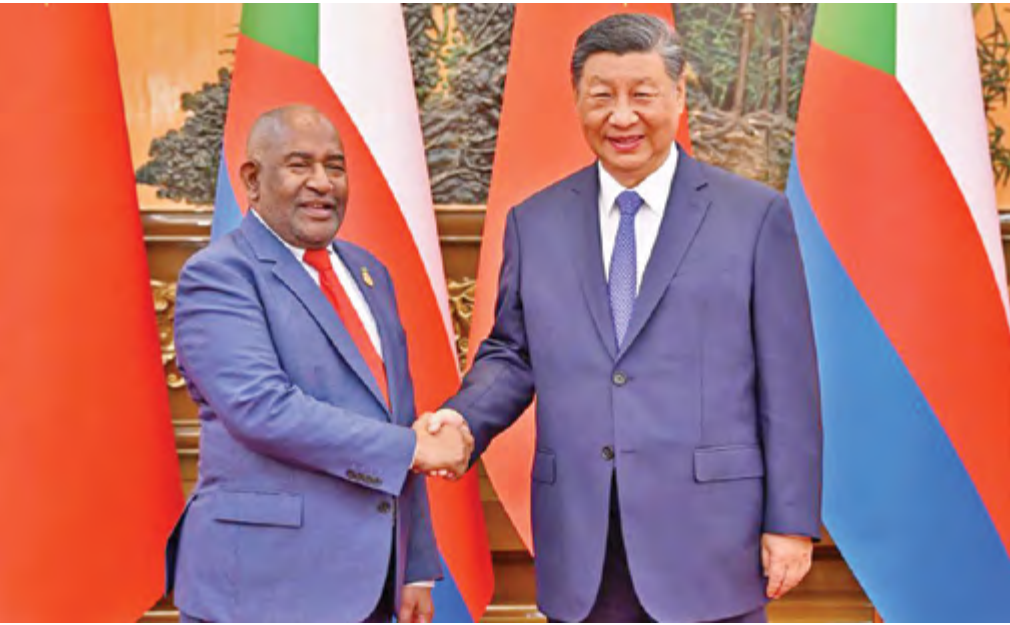
Beijing, China - Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday hosted several regional leaders ahead of China-Africa summit, emphasising sovereignty, and support for independent economic development.

Beijing will host a three-day Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) from Wednesday and many African leaders and officials are scheduled to attend it.

Xi on Monday hosted several of those leaders for bilateral talks in Beijing, according to Hua Chunying, spokeswoman for China's Foreign Ministry.

During his meeting with Mali's junta leader Assimi Goita, Xi recalled former Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai had visited the west African nation 60 years ago. "The two sides issued a joint communiqué, which was the first public document that listed China's eight principles for economic aid and technical assistance to other countries," Xi told Assimi Goita.

The principles, Xi said, included 'respect for sovereignty, support for independent eco-



Chinese President Xi Jinping meets with Comorian President Azali Assoumani, in Beijing on Monday (Xinhua)

nom development and non-interference in internal affairs'.

These principles, said the Chinese leader, are a 'pioneering effort of China and Africa to make the world order fairer and more just'.

In his meeting with DR Congo President Felix Tshisekedi, Xi said: "With remarkable achievement in practical cooperation,

Beijing will host 3-day FOCAC from Wednesday and many African leaders and officials are scheduled to attend

China and DR Congo have become a stellar example of developing countries partnering up for modernisation."

Xi also met Djibouti President Ismail Omar Guelleh who the Chinese leader described as 'an important witness and participant in the development and success' of FOCAC.

"China shares a time-hon-

oured, resilient and vibrant friendship with Togo and with Africa as a whole," Xi told President Faure Gnassingbe of Togo.

'The friendship was forged by the elder generation' of Chinese and African leaders, including Chinese Communist Party former Chairman Mao Zedong, former Premier Zhou Enlai and former President Gnassingbe Eyadema, he recalled.

During his meeting with President Azali Assoumani of the Comoros, Xi said China was ready to partner with the African nation 'to tackle poverty and transform Comoros' geographical advantage and marine resource endowment into growth drivers, and make the China-Comoros community with a shared future'.

The two nations will mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties next year.

During the summit which begins on Wednesday, the participants are expected to discuss China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and its integration with Africa's Agenda 2063.

Anadolu Agency

Over 600,000 Gazan kids ‘traumatised’

Gaza City, Palestine - Over 600,000 children in the Gaza Strip are deeply traumatised and living in rubble amid a devastating Israeli offensive, the head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) said on Monday.

“Boys and girls around the region are going back to UNRWA schools except in Gaza,” UNRWA Commissioner-General Philippe Lazzarini said on X.

“They continue to be deprived of learning + schooling. Half of them used to be in UNRWA schools.”

“The longer children stay out of school, the higher the risk of a lost generation, fuelling resentment and extremism,” Lazzarini warned. The UNRWA chief said more than 70 per cent of schools run by the UN agency in Gaza were destroyed or damaged.

“The vast majority of our schools are now overcrowded shelters with hundreds of thousands of displaced families. They cannot be used for learning,” Lazzarini said.

“With no ceasefire, children are likely to fall prey to exploitation,” he said, calling on the international community to prevent a repeat of what has occurred in other conflicts around the world. “A ceasefire is a win for all: it



UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini said more than 70 per cent of schools run by the UN agency in Gaza were either destroyed or damaged

will allow respite for civilians, the release of the hostages + a flow of much needed basic supplies including for learning,” Lazzarini said.

Vaccination campaign continues
A polio vaccination campaign for children under the age of 10 con-

tinued for the second day in the central Gaza Strip on Monday amid a deadly Israeli offensive on the enclave.

On the first day of the campaign, teams from UNRWA and their partners successfully vaccinated approximately 87,000 children, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

“Efforts are ongoing to provide children with this key vaccine,” UNRWA said in a statement, emphasising the urgent need for a ceasefire to ensure the safety and well-being of the population.

The campaign focuses on central Gaza from September 1 to 4, followed by Khan Younis from September 5 to 9, and will con-

clude in Gaza City and the northern regions from September 9 to 12, according to official sources.

On August 16, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a seven-day humanitarian truce to allow for a polio vaccination campaign targeting 640,000 children. This call was supported by UNRWA.

The request followed the Palestinian Health Ministry’s announcement of the first confirmed polio case in Gaza, affecting a ten-month-old child. Meanwhile, the Israeli army handed over the body of a Palestinian detainee on Monday to the Red Crescent Society after his arrest in the occupied West Bank

Jenin and the northern West Bank for the sixth consecutive day on Monday, killing at least 30 Palestinians and causing massive destruction in the area. Dozens of Palestinian families have fled their homes in the Jenin refugee camp amid the ongoing Israeli offensive in the area, according to an Anadolu reporter.

The vast majority of our schools are now overcrowded shelters with hundreds of thousands of displaced families. With no ceasefire, children are likely to fall prey to exploitation

PHILIPPE LAZZARINI

with the body carrying signs of torture, according to Palestinian sources.

The Red Crescent Society said in a statement that its teams received the body of a 50-year-old detainee at the Salem checkpoint in the Jenin area.

The official news agency Wafa, citing Palestinian security sources, identified the detainee as Ayman Rajeh Abed from the town of Kafr Dan, west of Jenin.

He was arrested at dawn on Monday and his body showed signs of torture, the sources said.

The Israeli army continued a large-scale military offensive in

Tensions have been running high across the occupied West Bank amid a brutal Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip since October 7 last year.

At least 682 Palestinians have since been killed, nearly 5,600 injured and 10,400 others detained in the occupied territory, according to Palestinian figures.

Meanwhile, in the Gaza Strip, at least 48 more Palestinians were killed in Israeli attacks, pushing up the overall death toll since last October 7 to 40,786, the Health Ministry in the enclave said on Monday. Anadolu Agency



Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant and PM Benjamin Netanyahu

Disputes escalate between Israeli PM, defence minister

Jerusalem - Disputes have escalated between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defence Minister Yoav Gallant over the army’s presence in the Philadelphi Corridor, a demilitarised area along the border between the Gaza Strip and Egypt.

Netanyahu sees the axis as a ‘lifeline for Hamas’, ruling out any withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the corridor, the Israeli public broadcaster KAN said.

Netanyahu’s hardline position is seen by opposition leaders and families of Israeli hostages in Gaza as hindering efforts to reach a Gaza ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement with Hamas.

Last Thursday, Israel’s security cabinet voted to maintain Israeli military presence at the corridor, a position that drew fire from the defence minister.

Gallant called Israel’s control of the corridor ‘an unnecessary

constraint that we’ve placed on ourselves’.

“We will not live up to the war goals we set for ourselves,” he said during a security cabinet meeting on Sunday. “The decision made on Thursday was reached under the assumption that there is time, but if we want live hostages, there’s no time.”

“We endangered soldiers for decades for single individuals. How are we to treat the lives of 30? It’s moral bankruptcy,” the defence minister said, in reference to a 2001 prisoner swap deal with Hamas under which more than 1,000 Palestinian detainees were released in return for captured Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. During the meeting, Gallant reminded Netanyahu: “You released 1,027 prisoners, including Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, in exchange for just one man, Gilad Shalit.”

Anadolu Agency

US likely to present final ceasefire deal

Istanbul, Turkey - The US is weighing a final proposal for a hostage exchange and ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas after the Israeli army found the bodies of six hostages in Gaza, including a US citizen, according to sources cited by Axios on Monday.

White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan informed the families of US hostages held in Gaza that President Joe Biden is considering presenting this proposal later this week.

“President Biden is considering presenting Israel and Hamas a final proposal for a hostage-release and ceasefire in Gaza later this week,” Sullivan told the families during a Sunday meeting, according to two well-placed sources cited by Axios.

The discovery of the six hostages, including US national Hersh Goldberg-Polin, has increased pressure on Biden’s top aides to expedite an agreement and present Israel and Hamas with ‘a take-it-or-leave-it mo-



Thousands protest in Israel to demand hostage swap deal with Palestinians

President Biden is considering presenting Israel and Hamas a final proposal for a hostage-release and ceasefire in Gaza later this week

JAKE SULLIVAN

ment’, the sources said.

The report revealed that Biden is set to meet with his national security team on Monday morning to determine the strategy for the final push regarding the deal.

Additionally, Vice President Kamala Harris is expected to join Biden during a meeting with the US hostage deal negotiating team on Monday, according to the White House schedule.

Israel estimates that more

than 100 hostages are still being held by Hamas in Gaza, some of whom are believed to have been killed. For months, the US, Qatar, and Egypt have been trying to broker an agreement between Israel and Hamas to ensure a prisoner exchange and ceasefire, as well as to allow humanitarian aid into Gaza.

However, mediation efforts have stalled due to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s

refusal to meet Hamas’s demands to stop the war.

Strike in Israel

Meanwhile, a nationwide strike swept across Israel on Monday, intensifying pressure on Netanyahu to reach an immediate ceasefire and prisoner exchange deal with Hamas.

The General Organization of Workers, Histadrut, initiated the strike to amplify public outcry for the release of hostages held in Gaza. According to Israel’s public broadcaster, KAN, the strike has spread rapidly across the country after massive protests the previous evening. Nearly 770,000 Israelis took to the streets in cities such as Tel Aviv, demanding immediate government action.

The one-day, which follows the recovery of the bodies of six Israeli hostages from Gaza, represents a significant escalation by the Histadrut, reflecting widespread frustration with the government’s handling of the hostage crisis.

Anadolu Agency

Iran’s military rules out foul play in Ebrahim Raisi’s death

Tehran, Iran - Iran’s military has said that inclement weather conditions, including thick fog, were the cause of the helicopter crash in May this year in which President Ebrahim Raisi and his entourage were killed.

As per a report in IRNA, the General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces released its final report on September 1, confirming earlier findings that harsh weather conditions in north-western Iran at the time of the

incident, including a dense and rising fog, were the primary cause of the crash.

Raisi along with seven others, including his foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, died in the air crash on May 19, 2024.

Following the tragedy, Masoud Pezeshkian was elected Iran’s new president in July this year.

The report said all the documents related to the helicopter’s maintenance and repairs, as well as its flight recorder were

checked. It said there were no defects found, and the chopper’s flight path was correct. It also said the possibility of the aircraft being targeted by offensive systems has been ruled out. ANI

Russia unleashes new wave of missile strikes on Kyiv, Sumy: Ukraine

Kyiv/Moscow - Russia unleashed a new wave of missile strikes on Kyiv and the city of Sumy in the northeast overnight.

The Ukrainian military said it had shot down some 22 drones over the capital and the surrounding area late on Sunday and early on Monday, hours before the school year was set to start.

“Overnight, Russia fired a total of 35 missiles, including ballistic ones, and 23 drones at Ukraine,” President Volodymyr Zelensky said. The air force said it had down nine ballistic missiles.

Zelensky said a mosque in the capital was one of the buildings damaged in the latest barrage as explosions could be heard throughout the city.

Presidential aide Mykhaylo Podolyak noted that it was the third year Ukrainian children would be starting school under the sound of artillery. “Today’s morning - the morning the kids go back to school - was no exception,” Podolyak said.

“Russia continues to deliberately attack civilians, critical infrastructure,” he added.



Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said that Ukraine’s incursion into the border region of Kursk will not stop his offensive in eastern Ukraine. “Their calculation was to stop our offensive actions in key parts of the Donbas,” Putin told school children during a visit to Siberia, adding: “We have to, of course, deal with these bandits who entered the Russian Federation.”

Putin also said on Monday that Ukraine has turned into a ‘bargaining chip’ that the West is using to achieve its geopolitical

ambitions.

“The main reason for today’s tragic situation in Ukraine is the deliberate anti-Russia policy pursued by the US-led collective West. For decades, they have sought total control over Ukraine... Ukraine virtually turned into a bargaining chip that the West used to achieve its geopolitical ambitions,” Putin said in an interview with Mongolia’s Onodur newspaper ahead of an official visit to Mongolia on Tuesday. Agencies

INDIA

Severe flooding in Andhra, Telangana; around 20 dead, thousands evacuated

Several people died across both states in rain-related accidents, local media reported

Vijayawada/Hyderabad - Incessant rain continued to cause devastation across the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on Monday, leading to widespread flooding.

The state governments have stepped up relief measures as the heavy rains have led to death of around 20 people, inundation of low-lying areas and evacuation of thousands.

The chief ministers of both the states are conducting meetings with officials on the rain relief measures, local media reported.

The Indian Air Force deployed two IL-76 aircrafts from Halwara and Bhatinda to airlift more than 200 NDRF personnel and tonnes of relief material to Vijayawada and Shamshabad to help aid the NDRF efforts in Andhra Pradesh, confirmed the Indian Air Force Media Co-ordination Centre on Monday.

Earlier on Monday, Andhra



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu visits the flood-affected areas following the heavy rainfall, in Vijayawada on Monday (ANI)

Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu inspected the flooding situation in various areas of Vijayawada.

Naidu said: "We are streamlining the system, and 110 boats are currently working to supply food and provide medical assis-

tance. I am regularly monitoring the floods, and officials are actively working on the ground. Since last night, I have visited many flood-affected areas. The public should not panic. We are setting up command and control centres in the flood-affected

regions."

Andhra Pradesh Governor S Abdul Nazeer also expressed concern over the heavy rain and floods causing disruption of normal life in Vijayawada and surrounding areas. He cautioned people to remain in safer

places and not to venture outside except in emergency situation with the help of government authorities.

The Governor also requested the Red Cross, Scouts and Guides, and other NGOs to coordinate with the government

authorities and actively participate in the rescue and relief operations and distribution of food, medicines and other essential items to the affected people.

Leader of Opposition and Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Monday expressed grief over

the flood situation in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and urged Congress leaders to mobilise aid to support the ongoing relief and rescue efforts in both the states.

He posted on X: "I strongly urge both the Central Government and the Andhra Pradesh Government to swiftly provide comprehensive rehabilitation packages for all those affected by this disaster."

Meanwhile, Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy on Monday declared the immediate assistance of Rs 5 crore to the flood-hit districts of Khammam, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Mahbubabad and Suryapet.

Chief Minister Reddy also announced Rs 5 Lakh ex-gratia to the kin of people who died in the floods. He instructed authorities to respond quickly to the damage caused to the public. He also assured that the compensation will be increased for the loss of cattle, goats and sheep.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, the state government will submit a comprehensive report on flood damages to the central government. Chief Minister Reddy said he will write a letter to the union government seeking immediate assistance and flood relief and appeal to the Centre to declare the floods in the state as a national calamity.

PM Modi's visit to Brunei to be a 'historic moment', says envoy

Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei - India's High Commissioner to Brunei, Alok Amitabh Dimri, has called Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to Brunei a 'historic moment' in bilateral ties and for the Indian community in Brunei.

In an interview with ANI, Alok Amitabh Dimri said that PM Modi's visit is historic in many ways as both nations have been civilisational neighbours. He also elaborated on influence of Indian culture in Brunei.

Dimri said: "In our four decades of diplomatic relationship, this is the first bilateral official visit by the Prime Minister of India to Brunei Darussalam.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

A high-level bilateral engagement is going to take place between PM Modi and His Majesty the King."

"India shares a deep historical roots and bonds with Southeast Asia. The Malayan tradition of this geography

which is located in the Borneo Island of Southeast Asian Seas derives deep linkages be it, linguistic, anthropological, ethnic, architectural, religious motives, customs and traditions," he added.

PM Modi will be on a two-day visit to Brunei from Tuesday. The visit coincides with 40th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Brunei. The Indian envoy said that many of the Southeast nation countries east of the Malacca Strait traditionally have been far more closer to India than many of the Central Asian nations which are geographically far closer.

ANI

Farmers' protest: Supreme Court constitutes high power committee

New Delhi - The Supreme Court on Monday said that farmers' protest must not be politicised and constituted a high power committee to look into the issues of the agitating farmers at Shambhu border near Ambala, where they have been camping since February 13.

A bench Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan said that five-members committee will be headed by Justice Nawab Singh, former judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court, and directed the committee to convene its first meeting with farmers within a week.

The top court asked the committee to reach out to and re-



Farmers gather at the Shambhu border protest site as the agitation completes 200 days, in Patiala on Saturday (ANI)

quest the agitating farmers to remove their tractors, trolleys etc. from the Shambhu border at the National Highway so as to provide relief to the general public.

The apex court said that there is a sizeable population of agricultural communities in the two states that belong to marginalised communities and

living below the poverty line, and deserve empathy.

"The High powered committee should reach out to and request the agitating farmers to remove their tractors. We hope the farmers will listen to the committee and vacate their vehicles from the border to provide huge relief to the general public," said the bench.

The apex court said that protesters can shift their agitation to an alternate area.

It further asked the chief secretaries and DGPs of both states to help the committee and consult the chairperson for the needful.

ANI

Pakistan: Ex-PM Imran Khan to face military trial?

Islamabad, Pakistan - Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has hinted that former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan might face a military trial, ARY News reported.

Speaking at a private news channel's talk show, Asif stated that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has to issue an apology to the country over the May 9 events, otherwise, there will be no dialogue, as per a report in ARY News. He said that 24 civilian cases trialled in the military court during the PTI-led government. He further said that out of these 24 cases, many were sentenced to death.

In a recent interview, Khawaja Asif said that if the PTI founder Imran Khan is tried in a military court, it would be an open trial.

Speaking at a private news channel, he called an open trial important to expose 'negative' designs of the PTI founder. He said that Imran Khan-found party



Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan

was 'involved' in the attack on national institutions on May 9, the report said.

He said: "The nation must know about the sinister designs of PTI against the security institutions. If former PM's case refers to a military court then open trial is

necessary to tell the public about PTI's leader."

Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said that the relationship between Imran Khan and former Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief Faiz Hameed continued even after May 9, ARY News re-

ported. He added: "The two (PTI founder and Faiz Hameed) had a common goal, which is why they had a relationship."

On May 9, last year, PTI workers held protests across the country after the arrest of Imran Khan from the Islamabad High Court. The protest, however, turned into riots with some mobs found at-

2023 on multiple charges, including the Toshakhana case, the cypher case, and the unlawful marriage case. His wife Bushra Bibi has also been behind bars for months. The court, however, suspended Imran Khan's sentence in the Toshakhana case, while other courts overturned his convictions in the cypher and

The nation must know about the sinister designs of PTI against the security institutions. If former PM's case refers to a military court then open trial is necessary

KHAWAJA ASIF

tacking military installations. PTI had urged people of Pakistan to come out and protest against Imran Khan's arrest.

Imran Khan, who served as Pakistan's Prime Minister from 2018 to 2022, has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail since August

iddat cases, respectively.

The chances of Imran Khan's release from prison further dimmed after the Lahore Police declared his arrest in various cases related to the May 9, 2023, riots.

ANI

Tropical storm Yagi lashes Philippines, claims 11 lives

Manila, The Philippines - Eleven people have lost their lives as tropical storm Yagi lashed the Philippines on Monday, bringing heavy rains that resulted in floods and landslides, reported Al Jazeera.

Storms and typhoons are a regular affair in the Philippines every year during the period between late June and October, resulting in widespread destruction.

Overnight on Sunday, Storm Yagi moved past the Bicol region southeast of the capital and was expected later on Monday to make landfall on the northeast coast of the main island of Luzon.

As a precautionary measure, the schools and government offices across Manila were shut down, whereas ferry services in affected areas

were suspended and 29 domestic flights were cancelled, Al Jazeera reported.

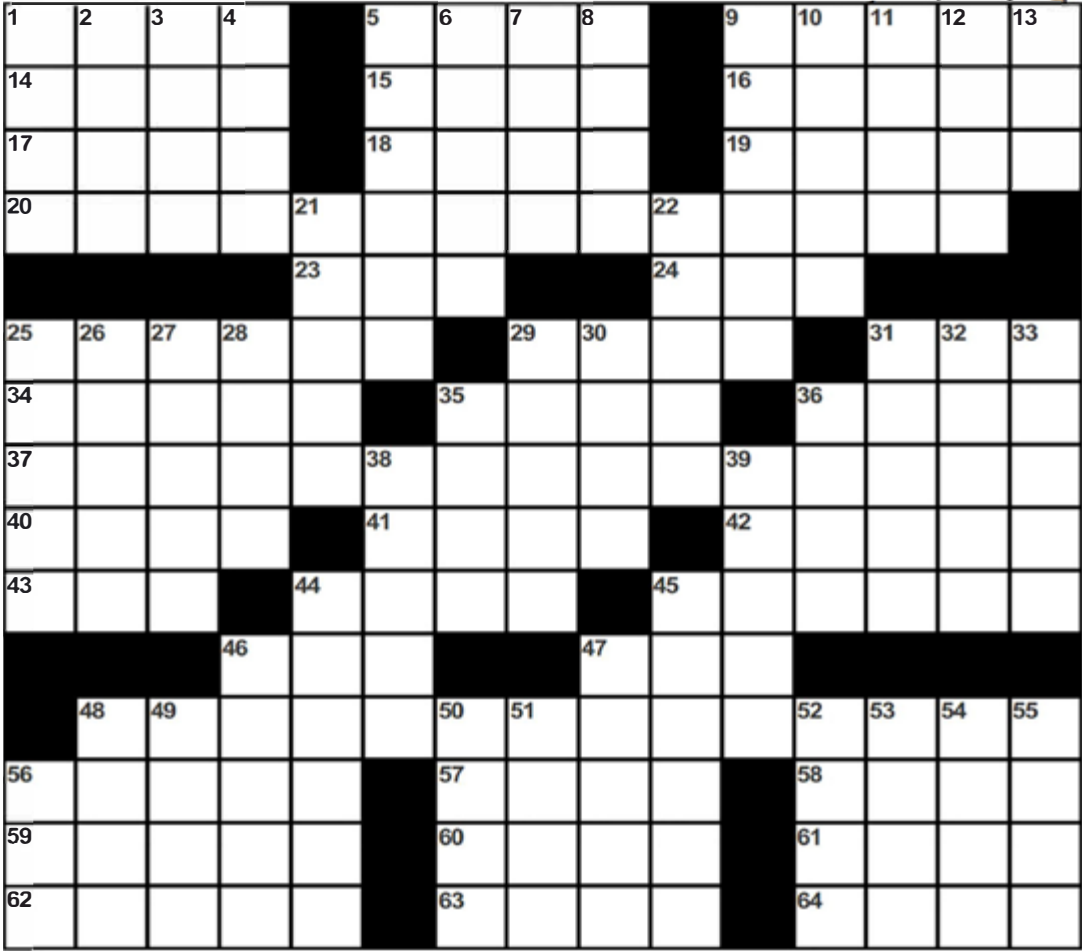
As the storm wreaked havoc in the Southeast Asian nation, over 300 people remained at the evacuation camps on Monday. Quoting the local officials, Al Jazeera reported that the floodwaters in the city of 210,000 people were slow to ebb due to high tide.

Meanwhile, separate landslides claimed two lives and resulted in the destruction of five houses in the central city of Cebu on Sunday, the Al Jazeera report added.

Powerful Typhoon Gaemi, in July, had triggered heavy rain and massive flooding in the Philippines, claiming at least 22 lives.

ANI

DAILY CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1) Plan detail, for short
- 5) Coffee, informally
- 9) Move up the ladder
- 14) Our genus
- 15) Valhalla ruler
- 16) Not the social type
- 17) Line with a Star of David logo
- 18) Nevada mecca
- 19) One treading the boards
- 20) Elaborate promo job
- 23) Post-grace exhortation
- 24) Covert_ (spy doings)
- 25) Pago Pago native
- 29) Young goats
- 31) Prefix with "glottis"
- 34) Take home from a shelter
- 35) Droning lecturer
- 36) Black cat, to some
- 37) "How many licks does it take ..." candies
- 40) Drops an easy one
- 41) College bigwig
- 42) Certain belly button
- 43) Pay a visit to
- 44) Jerome who composed "Show Boat"

DOWN

- 1) Place for a mower
- 2) Sport you can't play left-handed
- 3) Online zine
- 4) Fizzy drink
- 5) Land bordering the Dead Sea
- 6) Highly skilled
- 7) "In_ veritas"
- 8) Auth. unknown
- 9) Manila envelope features
- 10) Lomond and others
- 11) Division word
- 12) Cry from a 44-Down
- 13) "It's cold!"
- 21)_foot oil

- 22) Alpine tune
- 25) Fills to excess
- 26) Be gaga about
- 27) Roger who played 007
- 28)_ out (declines)
- 29) Islamic sacred text
- 30) Dietary supplement
- 31) Ham it up
- 32) King known as "The Short"
- 33) Atlas blowup
- 35) Pub offering
- 36) Magnum_ (great work)
- 38) Model of perfection
- 39) Successful dieter
- 44) Litter box baby
- 45) Bruce Wayne's butler
- 46) Bullwinkle, for one
- 47) Banded gem
- 48) Jamie of "M* A *S*H"
- 49) Bassoon's cousin
- 50) Minnesota's St. _ College
- 51) Punch-in time for many
- 52) Partner of sciences
- 53) Press-on item
- 54) Smuggler's weight unit
- 55) Bumped off
- 56) Fez or kepi

NOTE PAD



YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19

It's time to think about what's important to you, but then, you don't need to be told that. It's probably been next to impossible for you to focus on anything else. If there's any way to excuse yourself from a situation that requires you to act other than how you really feel, better make arrangements bright and early to be unavailable. If a situation demands your presence, get in and out as quickly as you can.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22

If any one loves a dare, it's you, and it doesn't matter at all whether it's spoken or just hinted at. So now, when a friend you've long admired for their bravery makes you an offer that sounds suspiciously like a dare, you won't hesitate for a single second. You may, however, need to do some explaining to your sweetheart if you're planning on skipping town. After all, you just can't turn down a challenge.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21

You've worked so hard for so long on this particular project that you can't imagine finishing it up. That's a good thing if you happen to be in a hurry to move on to something new, and when aren't you? If you're still trying to get the attention of a certain authority figure, however, drop some hints. Let them know you're in the home stretch and you'd like their executive opinion.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20

First thing this morning, you really should decide what to give them, "them" being your sweetheart, best friend, or whoever it is who's been putting up with you lately, no matter what you've dished out. You know it hasn't been easy, you know what they'd like, and you know they deserve it. Be nice. Your feelings are going to be obvious anyway. Might as well be sure it's the good ones they remember.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22

You're not mean-spirited, not one tiny bit. You can, however, be goaded into behavior that's beneath you if someone shows anything less than total respect for a worthy cause, much less one that's near and dear to your heart. If you've already warned them, or if you know they've heard about your recent dealings with someone impolite, you won't hesitate to come out with both guns blazing. And well you should.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19

Believe it or not, you're an expert at romance. You just don't do it the way most folks do. When you're out to impress someone, you don't just pick up a pizza and some sodas. You make sure you're wooing them in a most elegant fashion with limos, fine wine and tickets to the theater. If you can't afford all that, however, not to worry. If anyone can make that pizza-and-soda evening feel special, it's you.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21

When you decide to take a few days off, it's quite different than when most of us do the same. Your friends and family aren't used to going more than a few hours without either seeing you or talking with you, so your absence raises all kinds of red flags. You're in the mood to disappear from the world now, however, and you won't want to chat with them about it. Be nice. Call when you know they won't be there to answer, and leave a message.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22

The long-distance travel bug hasn't just landed in your vicinity. It's set up shop in your imagination, igniting an insatiable urge to get to that place you've always wanted to see. So at the moment, getting there is the most important thing in the world to you. Fortunately, you know when to go and exactly the right person to invite, even if you present the offer to them as quickly as it occurs to you.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18

Telling the truth isn't just second nature to you. It's really more like an innate reaction that doubles when official business is impending. So now, regardless of how anxiously you're awaiting someone's answer to a tender question, you won't be willing to tone it down or take it back, not even if you know they'd prefer you hadn't started a major ball rolling with the powers that be. Oh, well. Respect is the glue that holds any relationship together.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22

You've often wondered about what might happen to the ones you love if you decided to stop taking care of them. Would they sink, swim, or find someone else to care for them? In which case, you'd never be able to live with the guilt. Regardless, it's just about time for you to do both yourself and your charge a favor. Give them a few referral numbers and a pep talk, make your exit and see what happens.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21

Your magnetism tempts anyone into doing just about anything. So when someone absolutely perfect walks by, you'll do everything in your power to entice them into spending time with you. If they're already yours, so much the better. You just have to be yourself, and they'll be just as infatuated as they were the first time you wooed them. If they're not yours, let's just say that situation won't last for very long at all.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20

You have little time to achieve your mission: find a way to make your loved ones realize that working together on the same side is better for all parties concerned than keeping a nonsensical battle of wits going, which won't help anyone at all. That said, you can only do what you can do, and you can't live anyone else's life for them. So if they won't cooperate, don't beat yourself up about it.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

01. The first African Nations Cup of what, was planned for South Africa in September 2009 although it did not take place?
- A. Motocross
 - B. Ice hockey
 - C. Kayaking
 - D. Ski orienteering

02. Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong were the first two Prime Ministers of which country?
- A. Brunei
 - B. Burma
 - C. Malaysia
 - D. The Republic of Singapore

03. What is an Afrikaans and South African English word for a roughly circular enclosure for livestock, surrounded by fencing?
- A. Kraal
 - B. Igloo
 - C. Boma
 - D. Tepee

Answers: 1.D 2.D 3.A

KIDS COLOURING



BOGGLER

D	O	N	K
D	E	U	I
S	D	E	C
C	E	L	A

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

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

DO YOU SUDOKU?

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

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

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

REDS RUN RIOT AT OLD TRAFFORD

Salah goal and Diaz doube help Liverpool cruise past Man United in Premier League

Manchester, England - Arne Slot maintained his perfect start as Liverpool head coach as the Reds ran riot in a resounding 3-0 victory over Manchester United at Old Trafford.

Luis Diaz's header handed the visitors the advantage 10 minutes before half-time, after Trent Alexander-Arnold had seen a potential early opener chalked off following a VAR review.

Diaz then doubled his tally seven minutes later with a low finish into the bottom corner after being picked out by an intricate pass from Mohamed Salah.

The Egyptian scored against United in the Premier League for the 12th time after the break, Liverpool punishing yet another mistake from the Red Devils' midfield to add some gloss to the scoreline.

The triumph sees Liverpool join Manchester City as the only two sides with 100 per cent records after three matches, while United enter the international break in 14th with three points.

Having seen Diogo Jota flash an effort wide of Andre Onana's goal early on, Liverpool thought they had silenced the Old Trafford faithful in the sixth minute.

A sweeping move saw Alexander-Arnold convert at the back post despite the best efforts of Diogo Dalot on the line, with the goal awarded on-field but overturned after a VAR review as Salah was found to have been offside in the build-up.

However, Slot's side would get their noses in front in the 35th minute as a poor pass from



Liverpool's Luis Diaz scores against Manchester United on Sunday

Casemiro was intercepted, then Salah crossing for Diaz to nod home at the far post.

The pair combined again to double the Reds' advantage three minutes before the break, with Salah again the architect as his cute pass into the area was finished smartly by Diaz after

Casemiro had been dispossessed. Salah got his name on the score-sheet after 56 minutes, finishing into the bottom-right corner after Kobbie Mainoo had been dispossessed in midfield, as things threatened to get ugly for United. The Red Devils avoided any further damage but were unable to

pull a goal back, Joshua Zirkzee squandering their two best opportunities in the dying stages.

Much of the talk throughout Erik ten Hag's time in the United dugout has centred on the Red Devils' lack of tactical identity, and their much-maligned midfield was ruthlessly exposed

again by Liverpool.

The opening exchanges saw Zirkzee and Bruno Fernandes attempt to press from the front. However, those behind them were not on the same page as Virgil van Dijk and Ibrahima Konate were able to get Liverpool moving upfield with relative ease.

The triumph sees Liverpool join Manchester City as the only two sides with 100 per cent records after three matches, while Manchester United enter the international break in 14th with three points

he was hooked in favour of 20-year-old Toby Collyer.

But fellow midfield youngster Mainoo was then culpable when Salah scored his 10th goal in nine appearances at Old Trafford, seeing his pocket pinched by Alexis Mac Allister, who got the Reds motoring upfield again.

Upon Anthony Taylor's final whistle, boos echoed around Old Trafford, with Ten Hag given plenty of food for thought during the international break.

Liverpool's trip to Old Trafford marked their sternest test under Slot to date, but the Dutchman passed it with flying colours.

Perhaps unlike his United counterpart, Slot has already stamped a recognised style upon his group of players, with their expansive and dynamic football building on the foundations laid during Jurgen Klopp's glittering nine-year stint at Anfield.

Ten Hag: I am not Harry Potter

Manchester, England - Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag has claimed that he is not "Harry Potter" and that it will take time to fix the problems his side are facing.

United suffered a heavy defeat at home to Liverpool, making it two losses from their opening three matches.

But Ten Hag is still confident that his side can bounce back from a disappointing start and end another season with silverware, having won a trophy in each of the last two seasons.

"It's not like I'm Harry Potter and that is what you have to acknowledge," Ten Hag said in his post-match press conference.

"It is the third game of the season. I have had to explain this so many times. We have to build them in the team and it will take time. We will be fine but it is clear we have to improve.

"At the end of the season I am quite confident we will have a big chance to lift another trophy."

Ten Hag also discussed the positive impact new signing



Erik ten Hag (R) says Manchester United need time to fix their problems

Manuel Ugarte can provide.

"If you see Manuel Ugarte, he didn't play so far in the season," Ten Hag added. "Not one match minute and so he needs to build his fitness state and then we

have to build them in the team and then I'm sure he will contribute to our level.

"He will be an important player but that will take a couple of weeks maybe even months

and that I think counts for more players for instance Joshua Zirkzee, who made big steps the last three four weeks. I'm very pleased with his performance today."

Three good matches, but results do not reflect that, says Tottenham's Postecoglou

Newcastle, England - It has been a frustrating start to the new Premier League season for Tottenham Hotspur but their rewards will come if they keep performing the way they have in their opening three games, manager Ange Postecoglou said.

Tottenham enjoyed 66% possession and had 20 shots at goal, but lost 2-1 in Sunday's away trip to Newcastle United, where they spurned numerous opportunities and watched as the home side took theirs.

That followed a 1-1 draw at promoted Leicester City in their opening game, where they were equally dominant, and a 4-0 win over out-gunned Everton.

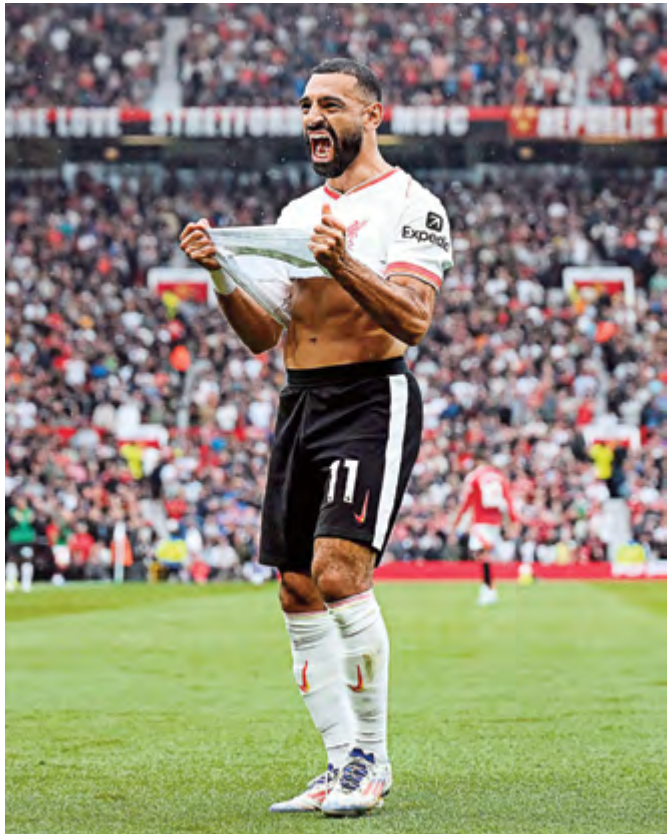
"Story of our season so far really. We played well and controlled the game for the most part. They (Newcastle) were a threat in transition but we still had enough chances to win the game comfortably," Postecoglou told BBC.

"The goal we conceded in the second half was sloppy and we lost focus. The game should have been put to bed before that.

"What I know is if we continue to play like that, we will get our rewards. The way we controlled the game was really pleasing."



Ange Postecoglou



Liverpool's Mohamed Salah celebrates after scoring against Manchester United in their Premier League match on Sunday

'It was easy, it could have been five or six'

Manchester, England - Mohamed Salah says Liverpool could have beaten Manchester United by a bigger margin than the 3-0 victory that they delivered at Old Trafford.

Salah scored for the seventh consecutive match at Old Trafford to take his goal tally there to 10 in nine matches. He also set up the first two goals for Luis Diaz and enjoyed his latest visit to the stadium.

"A great result," Salah told Sky Sports. "Everyone knows the derby is important for the fans and the city. We need to carry on and if you want to fight for the league you have to win each game.

"I managed to be involved in three [goals] so I am happy about that. The manager likes us to press high and there was a couple

of mistakes and we managed to use them - it was part of the plan."

On whether it was an easy game, Salah replied: "I agree with you, I was a little surprised. The game could have finished five or six.

"The new manager comes with his style and he wants everyone to adapt, he had a few meetings with senior groups saying you need to set an example for the younger players.

'It could be my last time at Old Trafford'

Salah also hinted that this could be his last season at Liverpool as his contract expires at the end of June 2025.

"To be fair I was coming to the game it could be the last time [playing at Old Trafford]," he said. "Nobody in the club has talked to me about contracts."

'Foden unlikely to play for England due to illness'

Manchester, England - Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said midfielder Phil Foden is unlikely to join up with the England squad for Nations League fixtures against Ireland and Finland due to illness.

The 24-year-old, who was called up by interim England boss Lee Carsley for matches in Dublin on September 7 and Finland at Wembley three days later, has made only one appearance for City this season as a substitute in their Premier League opener at Chelsea two weeks ago.

"I don't think so right now," Guardiola said when asked about Foden joining the England team.



Phil Foden

I don't think so right now. I think he will not go but I don't know. He doesn't feel well. But national teams, they decide.

PEP GUARDIOLA

"I think he will not go but I don't know. He doesn't feel well. But national teams, they decide."

Foden has earned 41 caps for England and started all of their games at Euro 2024 in Germany.



Paris St Germain's Bradley Barcola celebrates after scoring against Lille

PSG cruise to win against Lille

Lille, France - First-half strikes from Vitinha and Bradley Barcola and a late Randal Kolo Muani goal earned Paris St Germain a 3-1 win at Lille on Sunday to maintain their perfect start to the Ligue 1 season.

Vitinha opened the scoring from the penalty spot in the 33rd minute following a foul by Lille's Alessandro Ribeiro on Ousmane Dembele.

Barcola doubled the lead just three minutes later, striking at the far post after a counter attack to continue his fine form with his fourth goal of the season.

Lille improved after the break and Edon Zhegrova pulled one back with a long-range effort 12 minutes from time before Tiago Santos thought he had equalised, his goal disallowed for offside.

The hosts kept pushing for a late equaliser but Kolo Muani sealed the win for the reigning champions with a towering header in added time.

MBAPPE ON TARGET

Frenchman's double gives Real Madrid win against Real Betis

Madrid, Spain - Real Madrid forward Kylian Mbappe's late double, including a penalty, secured a 2-0 home success over Real Betis on Sunday, earning the champions their second LaLiga victory of the season.

France captain Mbappe, who moved to Marid from Paris St Germain in June, did not score in their first three LaLiga games after netting on his debut, a 2-0 win over Europa League champions Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup to start the season.

On Sunday, the Frenchman ended his short drought to help his side claim a second win in four league games, which eases the pressure ahead of the two-week international break as they stand in second spot with eight points, four behind Barcelona.

"It's a great moment. I was really looking forward to scoring in this mythical stadium, the best in the world," Mbappe said.

"But the most important thing is the victory. We had to win after Las Palmas, even though we faced a difficult game, as they all are against rivals here. But we are Real Madrid. And we won at last."

Following a disappointing 1-1 draw at lowly Las Palmas on Thursday, and still missing attacking midfielder Jude Bellingham due to a leg injury, the hosts



Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe scores against Real Betis on Sunday

It's a great moment. I was really looking forward to scoring in this mythical stadium, the best in the world. But the most important thing is the victory.

KYLIAN MBAPPE

had another slow start on Sunday, dominating possession but failing to create clear chances.

The so-called "New Galacticos" Mbappe, Vinicius Jr and Rodrygo misplaced too many passes and struggled to connect.

Betis were well organised in

they alternated positions early on, with the same problems from previous games suggesting Madrid must work harder than expected to fit Mbappe into their system.

Mbappe missed a couple of clear chances from crosses by Vinicius and failed to beat defenders for pace in the opening stages but looked more like his old self in a couple of runs from

the middle and the left wing as the game progressed.

The home side looked livelier after the break, with Mbappe and Vinicius starting to click, and they kept making progress in the second half, with Vinicius hitting the post in the 50th.

They finally broke the deadlock in the 67th minute through Mbappe's close-range effort after a brilliant back-heel by midfielder

Federico Valverde, who showed great vision to beat the offside trap. Mbappe wrapped up the points in the 75th with a penalty after Vinicius was fouled by goalkeeper Rui Silva.

Mbappe said scoring his first LaLiga goals for his new club on Sunday was a relief.

"I've been happy ever since I arrived here," Mbappe told DAZN.



Bayern Munich's Thomas Muller celebrates after scoring against Freiburg

Kane and Muller score as Bayern beat Freiburg

Munich, Germany - A Harry Kane penalty and a second-half goal by Thomas Muller was enough to give Bayern Munich all three points in the Bundesliga as they beat Freiburg 2-0 on Sunday and new head coach Vincent Kompany continued his winning start.

Bayern were awarded a penalty for a handball following a VAR review when Kane's header hit the arm of Freiburg captain Christian Gunter.

Kane stepped up to take the penalty himself, and the England striker sent Freiburg goalkeeper Florian Muller the wrong way, slotting the ball into the bottom left corner to give the hosts the lead in the 38th minute.

It was Kane's first goal of the new Bundesliga season, having topped the scoring charts of the German league last campaign with 36 goals.

There was little to separate the two side's in a cautious opening spell at the Allianz Arena but once Bayern got going it quickly turned into a fairly one-sided contest.

Jamal Musiala showed flashes of brilliance, and new signing Michael Olise looked lively, but the duo failed to convert their chances.

The second half was a much quieter affair until Serge Gnabry's cross found Muller, who beautifully controlled the ball and smashed it past the goalkeeper.

The 34-year-old Muller made history for Bayern, making a club record of 710 appearances for the Bavarians. It was also his 150th goal in the Bundesliga.

"A brutally beautiful goal! I told the fans on the fence after the game that they should work hard this year because they need a few days off."

Kompany all praise for 'outstanding' Muller

Wolfsburg, Germany - Thomas Muller became Bayern Munich's record appearance holder when he came off the bench to score in their win over Freiburg on Sunday, and there is still more to come from the 34-year-old, manager Vincent Kompany said.

Muller's entrance from the bench gave him 710 appearances for Bayern, overtaking the record set by keeper Sepp Maier who retired in 1979, and his 150th Bundesliga goal sealed a 2-0 victory.

In a strange twist of fate, back in 2008 Kompany was making his last club appearance as a player in Germany in the very game where Muller made his debut, before Bayern's current manager left Hamburg SV to join Manchester City.

"Outstanding. I witnessed his first game. I was there with Hamburg on this pitch. 710 games later, it's unbelievable," Kompany said.

"He gave 100 per cent in 710 games, but not only in the games, but also in training. That's what makes Thomas so special."

"There are a few more games that he can still play and we are definitely pleased that he's got a few more in his locker and the fact that he can keep going like this, it's so important for us."

Kompany said his side's performance dipped after the break, but luckily he has players like Muller he can call upon when the need arises.

"Very positive first half, and then in the second half we were just one step later than Freiburg on second balls, and we lost a little bit of the momentum," he said.

"But then I have to say that we're very fortunate to have very good players that can come on and make the difference, and Thomas Muller came on, Kingsley Coman too, and the players from the bench were very important for us to win this game."



Vincent Kompany

He gave 100 per cent in 710 games, but not only in the games, but also in training. That's what makes Thomas so special.

VINCENT KOMpany



Luis Enrique

Lille game a good test for the Champions League, says Enrique

Lille, France - Paris St Germain's 3-1 win at Lille in Ligue 1 on Sunday was a good test ahead the Champions League, coach Luis Enrique said, as their opponents will also feature in Europe's elite club competition starting later this month.

Goals from Vitinha, Bradley Barcola and Randal Kolo Muani earned French champions PSG their third win in three league games this season against Lille.

However, they are already

looking ahead to their Champions League opener on September 18 against Spanish side Girona.

Lille face Portugal's Sporting a day earlier in their first Champions League game since the 2021-22 season as they secured their spot in the competition through last month's playoffs.

"It was an away game against a team who play in the Champions League, who already played several games and have a very different rhythm to us," Enrique

told reporters.

"It was a very good test for us, it was a Champions League match for us. I'm pretty happy with the team's performance."

PSG and Lille are among the clubs preparing for a revamped Champions League format extended to 36 teams playing eight fixtures in the first round.

Enrique's side will have another test in Ligue 1 after the international break when they host Brest.



Nicolò Savona of Juventus vies with AS Roma's Alexis Saelemaekers

Roma, Juventus in goalless draw

Turin, Italy - Thiago Motta's Juventus dropped their first points of the campaign as they were held to a goalless draw by visiting AS Roma in Serie A on Sunday.

After back-to-back 3-0 victories against Como and Hellas Verona, Juventus are second in the standings, level on seven points with leaders Inter Milan as well as Torino and Udinese.

They were the only team in the Italian top flight with a maximum points tally after the previous round of games.

Both sides started with an initial spark but made mistakes and led to no clear chances.

The most promising opportunity arrived just before the break when Juventus forward Dusan Vlahovic struck with first touch from around the penalty spot but Roma keeper Mile Svilar did well to thwart his effort.

The shot remained Juve's only attempt on target throughout the game while Roma managed to stand up to the hosts.

Motta tried to shake things up at halftime as he made two offensive changes, introducing new arrival Teun Koopmeiners for his debut alongside striker Francisco Conceicao.



England's Gus Atkinson celebrates his five-wicket haul

England thrash Sri Lanka to seal series

London, England - Gus Atkinson took five wickets to get himself on the Lord's honours board for the second time in the match as England sealed a comprehensive 190-run win over Sri Lanka on Sunday, taking an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-Test series.

England's newest superstar followed his swashbuckling first innings century with figures of 5-62 in Sri Lanka's second as the visitors ultimately crumbled to 292 all out despite a spirited counter-attack on the fourth day.

Set a massive 483 to win and resuming on 53-2 overnight, Sri Lanka's task looked all but impossible. Their approach was to ignore the match situation and attack, ensuring a steady flow of wickets and boundaries over the course of a fourth day that at times resembled a limited-overs contest.

The morning session cost the visitors only nightwatchman Prabath Jayasuriya (4) and Dimuth Karunaratne (55). Karunaratne made the first half century by an opener in the series, striking Atkinson for three fours in one over before fending a lifter from Olly Stone through to wicket-keeper Jamie Smith.

Set 483 to win and resuming on 53-2 overnight, Sri Lanka's task looked all but impossible

Angelo Mathews (36) had looked typically assured after the lunch interval before chipping a catch to Chris Woakes at mid on from the bowling of Shoaib Bashir.

England's new frontline spinner had endured a tricky start to the day, leaking boundaries as Sri Lanka tried to hit him out of the attack.

At the other end of his career, the 35-year-old Woakes was typically metronomic on his favourite hunting ground, sending down seven maiden overs to give England a measure of control.

Dinesh Chandimal (58) appeared to be next out, trapped lbw by Woakes having raced to a half century off just 42 balls, but a review showed the thinnest of edges. He went soon after, caught by Dan Lawrence at short leg as a thick edge from an Atkinson rocket ballooned off the pad.

GUNS OF NAVARRO

American stuns reigning champion Gauff in US Open fourth round

New York, US - Coco Gauff's US Open title defence ended in a 6-3 4-6 6-3 loss to fellow American Emma Navarro in the fourth round on Sunday, the reigning women's champion becoming the latest big name to make an early exit at Flushing Meadows this year.

Gauff had been looking to avenge her fourth-round loss at this year's Wimbledon but Navarro stunned the crowd at Arthur Ashe Stadium with an aggressive all-round display to reach the quarter-finals for the first time.

Third seed Gauff fought her way back into the match after going a set down but ultimately 19 doubles faults and 60 unforced errors meant her first defence of a Grand Slam title was destined to end in disappointment.

"Mentally and emotionally, I gave it my all," said 20-year-old Gauff, who will now drop out of the top five in the world rankings. "Of course, there were things execution-wise, obviously I wish I could serve better."

"I think if I would have did that, it would have been a different story for me. But Emma played really well."

Navarro moves on to play Spain's Paula Badosa, who thrashed Wang Yafan of China 6-1 6-2 to reach the last eight in New York for the first time.

"I think I'm totally different, definitely, as a player. I play more aggressive, every part of my game has improved. Also I just



Emma Navarro's aggressive all-round game proved too hot to handle for Coco Gauff

play with more confidence and more belief," Navarro said, adding that she now makes better decisions on court. "Partially because the players I'm playing against, they'll shut it down if I don't make that more confident, aggressive choice. Also just because I think I have more belief in myself to be able to actually execute those types of shots."

In men's action, Alexander Zverev, Grigor Dimitrov, Taylor Fritz and Frances Tiafoe all marched into the quarter-finals in the bottom half of the draw which was left wide open after the third-round exit of four-times champion Novak Djokovic.

Zverev, still searching for his first Grand Slam title at the age of 27, reached the quarter-finals at a major for the 13th time after coming from a set down to beat American Brandon Nakashima 3-6 6-1 6-2 6-2.

The fourth seed will next face another American in Fritz, who overcame a sluggish start to beat Norwegian Casper Ruud, the losing finalist in 2022, 3-6 6-4 6-3 6-2. Fritz was later joined in the quarter-finals by Tiafoe, another player hoping to take advantage of the early exits of Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz to end America's 21-year wait for a homegrown men's champion.

Alexei Popyrin ousted Djokovic in a huge shock on Friday but was unable to progress any further as Tiafoe, roared on by a noisy evening crowd on Arthur Ashe, ran out a 6-4 7-6(3) 2-6 6-3 winner.

Bangladesh close in on series sweep as Pakistan crumble

Rawalpindi, Pakistan - Bangladesh remained on course for a 2-0 series whitewash over Pakistan after pace duo Hasan Mahmud and Nahid Rana bowled out the hosts for 172 in the second innings of the second Test on Monday.

Chasing 185 for victory, Bangladesh cruised to 42 for no loss in seven overs before bad light and subsequent rain forced early stumps on the penultimate day at the Rawalpindi Cricket



Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahmud's five-wicket haul earned him a place on the Rawalpindi honours board

Stadium. Zakir Hasan was unbeaten on 31, which included two sixes, with Shadman Islam on nine at the other end and Bangladesh needing 143 runs for victory. Earlier, Hasan (5-43) and Nahid (4-44) impressed with the ball once Pakistan resumed on nine for two.

After Taskin Ahmed removed overnight batter Saim Ayub (20), Nahid ripped the heart out of the Pakistan lineup by claiming three wickets in three overs.

A leaden-footed Shan Masood (28) slashed at a wide delivery while Babar Azam's run drought continued as he edged a Nahid delivery to Shadman at first slip on 11.

New man in Mohammad Rizwan (43) could have fallen for a first ball duck but Shadman spilled a regulation catch. Rizwan also got smacked in the helmet by a bouncer from Nahid who bowled at a lively pace in that fiery spell.

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

A smart, honest and efficient male, having a total experience of 22 years+ in MIS, Budget, Cashflow, Treasury, Banking, Tax, Audit, with the knowledge of SAP FICO, ERP, GPS, Tally, is looking for a senior position in Accounts & Finance. Contact: +968-91468679, Email: amitpandit007@gmail.com.

Indian male over 15 years experience in a leading MNC for civil project, fitout project and planning engineer with valid Oman driving licence is looking for a suitable placement. Contact: +968-96568922.

An experienced teacher with master's in Food Science & Nutrition, seeking roles in elementary school teaching/food quality department in hotels or food companies. Contact: +968-79115006 92781722 email: abreezaanees60401@gmail.com

BIRTHDAY WISHES



BILAL ABDUL KHADER

Wishing our sweetheart a very Happy Birthday! May Allah grant you a successful life. Family members

URGENTLY REQUIRED

- 1) Mechanical Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
- 2) Electrical Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
- 3) Civil Engineer - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience
- 4) AC technician - Minimum 2-year Oman Experience

We are looking for a dynamic and experienced Mechanical Engineer and Electrical Engineer to join our organization immediately. The ideal candidates will be responsible for the Technical aspects and growth of the company in service and maintenance related jobs.

Having Driving license is added advantage

Contact and send CV to: css400855@gmail.com

FOR RENT/SALE

Available 2100 sq meter best in class Warehouse cum office Space, fully furnished ready to use, Located at Prime area of Ghala in the heart of the city having easy access to airport & express Way.

Contact: Mr. Sumit Mudgil - 95616835
Girish Sewani - 93893596

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

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

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



Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

www.orbit-oman.com



Car Rental & Lease

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



HEART DISEASE CHECK

A recent study finds sleeping in on weekends may cut heart disease risk by 20%

Weekend napping

Do you barely get adequate sleep every night due to working late, stressful work hours, getting stuff organised for the next day, or having domestic chores piled up? You are not alone, but here is an easy way to make necessary amends.

A recent study found that people who slept extra hours on weekends were up to 20 per cent less likely to develop heart disease compared to those who didn't.

Catching up on missed hours of sleep during the weekend might be more beneficial than it seems. A new study revealed that sleeping in on weekends may help mitigate risks associated with sleep deprivation.

The new findings, which were presented at a meeting of the European Society of Cardiology, showed that people who got extra sleep lowered their risk of heart disease by up to 20 per cent.

"Sufficient compensatory sleep is linked to a lower risk of heart disease," Yanjun Song, the author of the study from the National Centre for Cardiovascular Disease and Fuwai Hospital in Beijing, China, stated. "The association becomes even more pronounced among individuals who regularly experience inadequate sleep on weekdays," he added.

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), adults who sleep for fewer than seven hours each night are more likely to experience health problems that impact their heart, raising the risk of heart disease, heart attacks, and strokes.

The study used data from nearly 91,000 people in the UK Biobank project, a large database containing health information from half a million people in the UK, to assess whether catching up on sleep during the weekend affects the risk of heart disease.

The researchers considered those who reported getting fewer than seven hours of sleep a night as sleep-deprived, accounting for 19,816 of the participants or roughly 22 per cent of the total.

They then examined the participants' medical records over a period of almost 14 years to determine who developed heart problems such as heart disease, heart failure, irregular heartbeat, or stroke.

Participants were divided into four groups based on how much extra sleep they had during the weekend. The group with the most weekend sleep was defined as having between 1.28 to 16.06 hours of additional sleep on weekends compared to their weekday sleep. Those with the least extra sleep on weekends actually lost between 16.05 to 0.26 hours of sleep.

The researchers found that participants who reported getting the most compensatory sleep on

weekends were 19 per cent less likely to develop heart disease compared to those who lost sleep during weekends.

In the subgroup of people with daily sleep deprivation, the study found that people who caught up the most on sleep over the weekend had a 20 per cent lower risk of heart disease than those who caught up the least. The study did not find any significant differences in these results between men and women.

"Our results show that for the significant proportion of the population in modern society that suffers from sleep deprivation, those who have the most 'catch-up' sleep at weekends have significantly lower rates of heart disease than those with the least," Zechen Liu, a co-author of the study also from China's Fuwai Hospital and National Centre for Cardiovascular Diseases, said.

(Courtesy: euronews.com)

CORRECT SLEEPING POSTURE

During sleep, your body works to restore and repair itself. Your sleep position can either help or hinder that process, depending on how effectively it supports the natural curvature of your spine. It's also common for people to wake up with brand new aches and pains in the morning, sometimes due to sleep position.

A proper sleep position can relieve stress on your spine, while an unhealthy position can increase pain or stiffness in the back, arms, or shoulders, all while contributing to lower-quality sleep.

The best sleep position is one that promotes healthy spinal alignment from your hips all the way to your head. What that looks like for you depends on your personal health situation and what you find comfortable.

There are some positions that are considered healthier than others. Specifically, sleeping on the side or back is considered more beneficial than sleeping on the stomach. In either of these sleep positions, it's easier to keep your spine supported and balanced, which relieves pressure on the spine and enables your muscles to relax and recover.

Adjusting to a new sleep position takes time. However, if sleeping on your stomach feels good to you, don't feel forced to change it. You can minimize your risk of pain and improve spinal alignment with the right mattress and pillow.

(Source: sleepfoundation.org)



VANDANA CHAWLA



NUTRITION YOU



Flax seeds an amazing health food

Flax seeds are truly an amazing health food. It is one of the oldest, and perhaps, the original health food. These tiny brown coloured seeds are packed with so many nutrients that it is truly a superfood.

Health benefits

- **Brainy Food** - Rich in healthy fats, like, Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids, it helps in brain development, brain working and functioning. Known and proven to improve a child's learning, concentration and attention span. Works great for kids

with ADHD or other learning disorders.

- **Cancer lowering properties** - Owing to the presence of lignans, these tiny seeds have been associated with decrease in cancer growth.
- **Good for gut health** - Packed with soluble fibre, flax seeds, promote digestive health. Plus, it also aids in keeping blood sugar levels under control, thereby helping in maintaining type 2 diabetes.
- **Helps in Lowering bad Cholesterol** - Studies indicate that high levels of fibre in flax seeds help in lowering LDL or bad cholesterol. Hence, it is considered as a heart-friendly food.
- **Helps in weight management** - High levels of soluble fibre in flax seeds offers higher satiety. This

helps in controlling cravings and thus helps in weight management.

- **A great beauty food** - With high content of Omega-3 fatty acids, lignans, fibre, and antioxidants, flax seeds help improve skin hydration, reduce inflammation, and protect against UV damage.

How to use

With so many health benefits, one wonders how to incorporate these seeds in one's diet.

Flax seeds can be grounded and used in all recipes, be it cereals, muffins, yoghurt, smoothies, cakes, curries, sauces, the choice is unlimited. It is advised to grind the seeds before using them. Our intestines find it difficult to break the tough outer covering of the seed. Hence, grind it and store it in an airtight

container so that it can be used as and when needed.

There is no standard recommendation, but taking 1tbsp of ground flaxseed per day can start giving good results. Again, it depends on one's tolerance, if one has weak digestion or is sensitive to high fibre food, then better to start with half the amount and gradually increase the amount.

Flax eggs

A flax egg is a vegan egg substitute, made up of ground flax seeds and water. It's 100% natural, gluten free, vegan, and it falls perfectly into any category of food that you're eating. It can be substituted for an egg in any recipe and make it vegan. Making it is very simple. Just mix 1tbsp of ground flax seed with 3tbsp of



water and leave it in the fridge for 10-15 minutes. You can replace egg in any recipe with this flax egg.

To conclude, flax seeds are loaded with proteins, Omega 3, soluble fibre and many other nutrients, all together making it a great health

food. It is versatile and can be used in different recipes, plus it can also substitute egg in any egg-based recipe.

(Vandana Chawla is an Online Nutrition Expert and a Registered Nutritionist-UKVRN)

IF YOU HAVE BEEN ENVYING THOSE WHO REGULARLY VISIT
A GYM AND WANTING TO DO SO YOURSELF, NOW IS
THE BEST TIME TO DECIDE. EVERYONE WHO
STARTS OUT ON A FITNESS JOURNEY DOES HAVE
A HOST OF DOUBTS AND CONCERNS

A young man with dark hair, wearing a grey t-shirt, is performing a bicep curl with a dumbbell in a gym. He is looking down at the weight, and his muscles are tensed. In the background, there are racks of colorful dumbbells (green, blue, and red) and other gym equipment.

So, you think you can gym?

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a black tank top and grey sweatpants, is performing a squat. She is holding a black 25 lb dumbbell with both hands in front of her chest. She is smiling at the camera. The background is a plain grey wall.



شانجان أوتو
CHANGAN AUTO
Driving Forward with You

CS85 COUPE

HIGH-END SUV THAT REFLECTS YOUR LIFESTYLE



2.0L Turbo Engine, 224 hp | 8 Speed AT

Manufacturer's Warranty - 6 YEARS / 250,000 KMS*

*Terms and Conditions Apply

EMI Starting From

OMR 148*

for 6 years





Star Diamond LED Headlamps with Matrix Fog Lamps



Dual HD Screens



Luxurious Cabin with Sporty Red Interior



360° Panoramic View



Adaptive Cruise Control



Lane Departure Warning

*Easing Monthly installment is calculated based on 20% down payment for 6 years loan tenure. Subject to credit approval from Banks only. Images shown are for illustrative purpose only. Specification may vary as per the model variant. To know more, please visit the CHANGAN AUTO Showroom.

Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment LLC

Showrooms : Qurum 94641010, Mawaleh 97888180
Sohar 95351205, Salalah 96629050, Btl 96628930

Sales Centers : Nizwa 96628940, Barka 96629010, Sur 96628920

800 508000

9662 8909

 **changanoman**
www.changanoman.com

CS85