

H M EXCHANGES RAMADAN GREETINGS WITH LEADERS

Muscat - On the advent of the holy month of Ramadan, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik exchanged cables of greetings on this blessed occasion with leaders of Arab and Islamic countries.

In the cables, His Majesty the Sultan expressed his heartfelt greetings and sincere sentiments, praying to Allah the Almighty to shower His blessings on all Muslims around the world during the holy month, in which good deeds are accepted, rewards are multiplied, and goodness and success prevail.

In their cables, the leaders conveyed their greetings to His Majesty, praying to Allah the Almighty to accept from His Majesty and the people of his sultanate the good deeds in this blessed month, and that they enjoy good health, wellbeing and prosperity. They appealed to the Almighty for the return of the holy month of Ramadan for many years to come with blessings and bounties.

ONA

3 digital platforms to boost govt services

Our Correspondent
Muscat

H H Sayyid Theyazin bin Haitham al Said, Minister of Culture, Sports and Youth, inaugurated the 'Together We Progress Forum' on Wednesday, organised by Secretariat General of Council of Ministers. The two-day forum aims to enhance communication between the government and society, review development programmes, and give citizens a platform to voice their opinions and concerns.

The event featured two discussion sessions on the first day focused on the economy and development, addressing the upcoming Five-Year Plan, economic diversification and the role of investments in the national economy. Five additional dialogue sessions will cover topics such as governorates' development; the future of professions;



the retirement system; culture, sports and youth; and the future of economic diversification sectors.

A key highlight of the forum on Wednesday was launch of three national digital platforms aimed at enhancing the quality of

government services and improving accessibility.

The Tajawub platform is for citizens to submit suggestions, complaints and reports to improve government services; the National System for Planning, Evaluation and Performance Fol-

TOGETHER WE PROGRESS FORUM GIVES CITIZENS A PLATFORM TO VOICE THEIR OPINIONS AND CONCERNS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

RO26BN
PROJECTED FDI BY 2024

RO9BN
CONTRIBUTION OF SMES TO GDP

32% - Electricity from renewables

2% Current contribution of digital economy to gross domestic product

7mn sqm: New city in Dhofar

low-up integrates government agencies to streamline planning, evaluation and monitoring of national goals; and the Unified National Portal for Electronic Services provides access to all government digital services, reducing the need for in-person

visits to government offices.

Sheikh al Fadhl bin Mohammed al Harthy, Secretary General of Council of Ministers, confirmed that the forum topics were selected through broad community engagement, with over 19,000 citizens participating. Over 7,500 citizens registered online to attend the forum sessions.

H E Saeed al Saqri, Minister of Economy, highlighted the impressive growth of the Omani economy, driven by non-oil sectors. He noted that the financial balance plan has bolstered confidence in Oman's investment climate, with foreign direct investments expected to reach RO26bn by the end of 2024.

H E Salim bin Nasser al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, reaffirmed the ministry's commitment to maintaining production capacity in the oil and gas

sectors, with operating costs between US\$9-\$10 per barrel. He also informed that 32% of electricity consumed in Oman is now sourced from renewable energy.

H E Saeed bin Hamood al Mawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, stated that the digital economy currently contributes 2% to Oman's GDP, which is expected to increase to 10% by 2040.

H E Dr Khalfan al Shuaili, Minister of Housing and Urban Planning, projected Sultan Haitham City would accommodate 500 Omani families by 2026-2027. Plans are also in place for a similar city in Dhofar covering 7mn sqm.

Halima bint Rashid al Zaria, Chairperson of Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development, noted that SMEs contribute nearly RO9bn to the GDP.

4,000 teachers to be hired in 2025/2026, total schools to reach 1,306

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Majlis A'Shura hosted Dr Madiha bint Ahmed al Shaibani, Minister of Education, on Wednesday to discuss the ministry's progress in school education policies, quality of education, human resource development,

training and private school education in the sultanate.

Dr Madiha highlighted the continued growth of the education sector, driven by government support and Royal Directives of His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik. The number of students in government schools increased from 678,000 in the 2020/2021



Dr Madiha bint Ahmed al Shaibani

academic year to 817,000 in 2024/2025, marking a 20.5% growth. The number of schools is also set to rise, reaching 1,306 in 2025/2026, compared to 1,182 in 2020/2021, reflecting a 10.4% increase.

The ministry has expanded teacher recruitment, appointing 15,000 Omani teachers in the

first four years of the 10th Five-Year Plan, compared to 6,800 during the ninth plan. An additional 4,000 teachers - primarily Omanis - are expected to join in 2025/2026, taking the total number of teachers appointed under the current plan to over 19,000.

The number of private and in-

ternational schools, including kindergartens, increased to 1,223 in the 2024/2025 academic year from 880 in 2019/2020 - up 39%. Student enrolment in private schools has also grown from 189,000 in 2019/2020 to 233,000 in 2024/2025, including 96,000 in pre-school education.

JETOUR
— Drive Your Future —

WIN BIG THIS RAMADAN

10 WINNERS
GET A CHANCE TO WIN JETOUR X70 PLUS

SCRATCH & WIN*
MALL OF OMAN SHOPPING VOUCHERS
UP TO OMR 1000/-

FREE SERVICE*
UP TO 100,000 KMS
FREE INSURANCE & REGISTRATION*

Offer valid from 23/02/2025 to 22/04/2025 only for customers buying Jetour vehicles from MHD dealership. Free insurance 1st year (Oman & UAE), Free 1st year registration, Free Service and Warranty varies from model to model. Raffle, Scratch and Win Gift Coupon upto RO 1000 with minimum assured RO 100 applicable on all models except T1 and T2. Offer not applicable on govt, taxi, rent a car or commercial deals. Images are for illustrative purposes only.

MOHSIN HAIDER DARWISH
AUTOMOBILES L.L.C.

800 80 222
714 61 999

jetouroman.com

AZAIBA | MABELA | SALALAH | SOHAR | BUREIMI



THE DIFFERENCE..
OUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH YOU

With 120+ branches
More than 360 ATMs and CDMs
we are always at your service.

f X IG IN bankdhofar 2479 1111 www.bankdhofar.com



RAMADAN

Time for reflection, positive change

Beyond fasting and spiritual reflection, Ramadan is a period for self-improvement and personal growth

Our Correspondent
Muscat

It is common knowledge that Ramadan offers the ideal opportunity for individuals to cultivate positive habits and break free from negative ones.

Beyond fasting and spiritual reflection, Ramadan is seen as a period for self-improvement and personal growth. With discipline, mindfulness and a renewed sense of purpose, the month encourages lasting changes in both character and lifestyle, experts believe.

Jihad Khalid al Farsi, head of Basmatna Ghair Team in Quriyat, emphasised the importance of engaging in volunteer work during Ramadan. He highlighted initiatives such as distributing meals to those in need, participating in community service and inviting family members to share iftar.

"There is also a beautiful custom where neighbours exchange prepared dishes in Ramadan. I hope this tradition



continues, as it fosters affection and love among individuals." Jihad also urged people to

donate to recognised volunteer organisations registered with Ministry of Social Development.

"This ensures that help reaches those who genuinely need it, further enhancing the spirit of

giving during Ramadan."

Ibrahim Abdulaziz, an imam, described Ramadan as an opportunity to instil self-discipline and time for spiritual growth. He stressed the importance of regular prayers, including the night prayers known as Tarawih, and showing compassion to the less fortunate.

"Ramadan teaches patience, wisdom and discipline - not just in prayer but also in daily interactions with family, colleagues and society. It is a time to prac-

tise self-control, avoid arguments and maintain strong family ties," he explained.

Breaking negative habits

Psychologist Khalid Tabook pointed out that Ramadan provides an ideal environment to break free from negative habits and adopt healthy ones. Practising moderation in eating, exercising patience and managing time wisely can lead to significant improvements in overall well-being.

Practising moderation in eating, exercising patience and managing time wisely can lead to significant improvements in overall well-being

He also noted that preparing for Ramadan should involve purifying the heart by resolving conflicts, organising time effectively, practising tolerance in business dealings, and excelling

"Unfortunately, some people waste food instead of sharing it. Others spend excessive time on social media rather than using their time productively. Some individuals also struggle with anger, forgetting that Ramadan is about patience and self-restraint," he observed.

He encouraged mindfulness in spending habits, urging people to avoid extravagance in shopping and food preparation. "Ramadan is a time for moderation, not overindulgence," he stressed.

Health benefits

Nutritionist Medhat Ali highlighted the numerous health benefits of fasting when done correctly. He explained that fasting could aid in weight management, lower blood pressure and reduce cholesterol levels.

"To fully benefit from fasting, individuals should avoid overeating during iftar and suhoor. Consuming nutritious foods, staying hydrated and maintaining a balanced diet can improve overall health," he said.

He recommended drinking sufficient water between iftar and suhoor, along with eating foods rich in hydrating fluids. "Proper hydration prevents fatigue and helps keep the body energised throughout the fasting hours."

CPA launches Ramadan campaign to ensure availability of goods

Our Correspondent
Al Wusta

With the holy month of Ramadan around the corner, Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) has launched a campaign to ensure the availability of essential goods throughout the month in Al Wusta.

In a statement, the Consumer Protection Department in the governorate announced intensified monitoring efforts in local markets to ensure that shops are stocked with the necessary goods for Ramadan. The authority also urged shop owners and suppliers to abide by laws and refrain from exploiting consumers during this



sacred time.

CPA's proactive approach aims to stabilise prices and prevent market exploitation, ensuring that consumers have access to essential items at fair prices. Ongoing inspections are reas-

suring the public of sufficient stock at major retailers, reinforcing the authority's commitment to consumer welfare during Ramadan.

The authority confirmed that it will ensure Ramadan Family

Packs, which include essential food items, are accessible to all segments of society. Coordination with suppliers and merchants, alongside the authority's diligent monitoring efforts, is intended to ensure that goods are available, safe and reasonably priced during the holy month.

Additionally, the authority will actively monitor commercial offers and advertisements, scrutinising promotions for both essential and non-essential goods, including electronics and vehicles. CPA's oversight of these offers reflects its commitment to preventing fraudulent practices and price manipulation during Ramadan.

Slaughterhouses announce Ramadan operating hours

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Muscat Municipality has announced revised working hours for the Seeb and Amerat slaughterhouses during Ramadan to accommodate public demand.

The Seeb slaughterhouse will operate from 9am to 4pm for individuals, while companies can access services from 6am to 9am. In Amerat, the facility will be open from 6am to 8pm



for individuals and from 8am to 1pm for companies.

On Fridays, the Seeb slaughterhouse will operate from 6am to 11am and again from 2pm to 4pm, while the Amerat facility will be open from 6am to 11am. The municipality has called on charities, meat suppliers and stores to coordinate with the slaughterhouses in advance to ensure smooth service.

The Directorate General of

Health and Veterinary Services at Muscat Municipality has reaffirmed its commitment to consumer health and safety. It conducts health checks on livestock before and after slaughter to detect diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease. Carcasses are also thoroughly inspected to eliminate any health risks.

Additionally, Muscat Municipality, in collaboration with the slaughterhouses operating company, has introduced strict pest control measures to prevent infestations of flies, mosquitoes and rodents within the premises.

Foreign Ministry enhances consular services with new digital platform

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Foreign Ministry launched a new e-services platform and mobile application to integrate advanced technology into its diplomatic and consular operations on Wednesday.

This aims to improve access to consular services, enable real-time communication and facilitate seamless interaction between citizens, residents, visitors and Omani embassies worldwide.

H E Khalid al Muslahi, Undersecretary for Administrative and Financial Affairs in Foreign Ministry, who presided over the launch event, said the platform reflects the ministry's commitment to innovation, modernisation and leveraging technology to enhance government performance.

The digital platform is part of the government's efforts to provide citizens, residents and diplomatic missions with efficient access to consular and diplomatic services. It is designed to acceler-



ate procedures, streamline operations, and strengthen communication between Omani embassies and the public globally.

H E Muslahi stated that the new facilities align with Oman Vision 2040, focusing on operational efficiency, reducing paper-based processes and enhancing digital engagement. "It integrates cutting-edge cybersecurity measures and connects with other government systems to ensure accurate, swift and secure transactions," he said.

The platform offers a unified digital environment for government institutions and diplomatic missions to manage transactions electronically. It includes an integrated electronic payment system and multiple service access options. The mobile application enhances user engagement by enabling instant communication with Omani embassies, electronic registration of traveller data, and access to consular and security updates, ensuring prompt responses to developments.

Plans to attract semiconductor and EV battery manufacturing to Oman

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman is poised to become a regional hub for cutting-edge industries with plans for a semiconductor factory and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. The announcement follows discussions between Omani officials and representatives of AONH Private Holdings, a Taiwanese semiconductor manufacturer, and Jetour JR, a Chinese electric car company.

The meeting, attended by H E Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, and H E Dr Saleh bin Saeed Masan, Undersecretary for Trade and Industry, explored opportunities for localising these high-tech industries in line with Oman's Industrial Strategy 2040.

H E Yousef emphasised the



We are working with relevant authorities to provide necessary facilities and incentives to support these projects

H E QAIS AL YOUSEF

government's commitment to attracting investments in emerging sectors, including semiconductors and EVs. "We are working with relevant authorities



to provide necessary facilities and incentives to support these projects, which will further establish Oman's position as a leading industrial centre."

AONH Chairman Ali Steve Chao informed that the company has selected Oman as its first investment destination in the region to establish a factory focused

on manufacturing AI semiconductor chips, which are integral to the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The project will also feature a training centre to help develop

local talent and boost Oman's industrial competitiveness.

An agreement to this effect was signed between Ministry of Transport, Communications and

Information Technology and AONH earlier this month.

In parallel, Jetour JR outlined plans to invest in Oman's EV sector, with advanced technologies in electric car charging and battery replacement. Initial studies suggest the company's investment in Oman could reach around US\$18bn, creating up to 10,000 jobs. The project, which is expected to begin within two years after official announcement, aligns with the country's push to diversify its economy and reduce dependence on oil.

H E Masan underscored the fact that these investments align with Industrial Strategy 2040, particularly in capital-intensive and knowledge-based industries. He highlighted the formation of a technical team to develop an executive plan to localise these projects and ensure successful implementation.

RO38mn Al Jufainah Dam inaugurated; to enhance flood protection for Muscat

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources (MAFWR) inaugurated the Al Jufainah Flood Protection Dam in Amerat, on Wednesday.

The RO38mn project is a key addition to the nation's flood mitigation infrastructure, boasting storage capacity of approximately 15.7mn m³.

Standing 30m in height and 2,287m in length, the dam is designed to enhance flood protection for Amerat and surrounding areas, including Wattayah and Qurm.

The opening ceremony was held under the patronage of H E Dr Mohammed bin Saeed bin Khalfan al Maamari, Minister of Endowments and Religious Affairs.

According to H E Ali bin Mohammed al Abri, Undersecretary for Water Resources in MAFWR, the dam is a crucial component of a broader flood management system comprising seven dams within the Wadi Adai watershed. The dams aims to safeguard residential and commercial areas



SMEs played a significant role, contributing 29% to the project's execution. Additionally, 46 Omani citizens were employed during the construction phase

from potential flood risks.

The Al Jufainah dam project, which took three years to complete, was preceded by extensive engineering and hydrological studies, involving international expertise. Notably, small and medium enterprises played a significant role, contributing 29% to

the project's execution. Additionally, 46 Omani citizens were employed during the construction phase, achieving an Omanisation rate of 43%.

With this latest addition, Oman now has a total of 200 dams, including 76 groundwater recharge dams, 117 surface stor-

age dams and seven flood protection dams. These structures are integral to the country's long-term water management strategy, helping to enhance water availability, mitigate flood hazards and support sustainable development.

H E Abri reiterated the importance of water resource management as a pillar of Oman's sustainability goals, stating that flood protection infrastructure plays a vital role in safeguarding communities and ensuring resilience against extreme weather events.

Oman-Uzbekistan Business Forum explores trade, investment opportunities

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) hosted the Oman-Uzbekistan Business Forum on Wednesday aiming to strengthen trade and investment ties between the two nations.

The forum provided a platform for exploring export and import opportunities and fostering economic collaboration.

The event coincided with the visit of a delegation of 20 Uzbek businesswomen representing key sectors such as real estate, design, electrical engineering, textiles, private education, healthcare and trade.

H E Abdul Salam Khatamov, Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Oman, emphasised the forum's significance in enhancing bilateral economic relations. He highlighted the role of women entrepreneurs in driving innovation and growth, underlining the importance of facilitating collaboration, knowledge exchange and business partnerships between the two countries.



Siham bint Ahmed al Harthi



H E Abdul Salam Khatamov

Siham bint Ahmed al Harthi, Board Member of OCCI and head of its Tourism Committee, stated that the forum - the first of its kind - focused on identifying areas of cooperation and investment opportunities across various industries. She reiterated the chamber's commitment to empowering women entrepreneurs and fostering greater private sector engagement between Oman and Uzbekistan.

Discussions centred on investment opportunities in Oman, government incentives for foreign investors, and potential col-

laborations in economic, tourism and cultural sectors. The forum also underscored the importance of knowledge-sharing and strategic partnerships between Omani and Uzbek business communities.

On the sidelines of the forum, bilateral meetings took place between Omani and Uzbek business representatives, facilitating direct engagement, trade discussions and potential joint ventures. The event reinforced both countries' commitment to expanding economic cooperation and strengthening private sector ties.

OCCI unveils 3rd excellence and innovation awards in S Batinah



Our Correspondent
Rustaq

Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) has launched the third edition of its Award for Excellence, Innovation and Sustainability in South Batinah. The launch ceremony, held in Rustaq on Monday, was led by Faisal bin Abdullah al Rawas, Chairman of OCCI's Board of Directors.

This annual initiative continues to recognise significant contributions to innovation and

sustainability, reflecting the evolving business landscape of the governorate.

For the first time, the award has expanded its eligibility criteria to include tourism companies, in addition to industrial firms and SMEs. Student-led businesses from higher education institutions and public schools operating in the governorate are now also eligible to compete.

Hamoud bin Salem al Saadi, Second Deputy Chairman of OCCI and Chairman of the South Batinah branch, highlighted the

growing participation from diverse sectors. He said, "The award fosters a competitive environment that strengthens private sector growth in the governorate."

The award's primary objective is to promote excellence and encourage innovation across various economic fields, contributing to the sustainable development of South Batinah. Applications will be assessed through a structured evaluation process, including field visits and interviews, to ensure transparency.

EA probes death of Arabian Sea humpback whale

Our Correspondent
Al Wusta

Environment Authority has launched an investigation into the death of an Arabian Sea humpback whale found off the coast of Al Jazir in Al Wusta on Tuesday.

The rare and endangered mammal's death is being examined in collaboration with multiple organisations to determine the cause and ensure scientific documentation.

The investigation is being conducted in coordination with the Wali's Office, Royal Oman Police, and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources. 'The goal is to identify the whale and determine the cause of its death in a systematic and scientific manner,' the authority stated.

Due to the challenging nature of the area, the authority has taken necessary steps to



collect data, measurements and samples with support from Future Seas Company to ensure

smooth execution. 'The investigation is ongoing, and once it is completed, the whale will be buried at a suitable site.'

The Arabian Sea Humpback Whale is classified as rare and endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List. It is one of 20

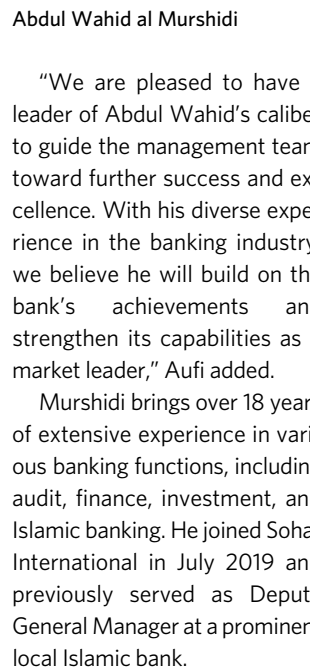
whale species found in Omani waters, as confirmed by satellite tracking studies.

Environment Authority expressed its appreciation to all participating entities and local communities for their support and awareness efforts in handling such incidents.

The complex will feature a range of modern facilities, including workshops and production lines, contributing to the development of light and medium industries across several sectors. It will also include packaging areas and logistics warehouses serving as regional storage and distribution centres, along with workspaces, administrative

Said Mohamed al Auli, Chairman of Sohar International, said, "Today marks an important milestone for Sohar International. Abdul Wahid's proven track record, exceptional expertise, and unwavering dedication make him the ideal leader to steer our bank into its next chapter. We are confident that under his guidance, Sohar International will continue to thrive and reinforce its position as a leading financial institution in the region."

In his new role, Murshidi will spearhead the bank's initiatives aimed at achieving exponential and sustainable growth.



Muscat – Marking another positive result in its ongoing transformation, Oman Air has recorded that point-to-point passengers accounted for 46% of total traffic in January 2025, a 35% increase from the same month in 2024.

This shift not only strengthens the airline's profitability, as point-to-point fares typically generate higher yields than transit fares, but also aligns with the Board of Directors' strategic goal to maximise inbound traffic, an initiative that supports Oman Vision 2040 by boosting tourism numbers.

"While we remain committed to serving the transit market, expanding point-to-point travel allows us to capture higher-yield opportunities and provide greater convenience to our guests," said Con Korfiatis, Chief Executive Officer at Oman Air. "By bringing more visitors directly into Oman, we can showcase the country's rich touristic experiences while strengthening our role in national economic development - boosting visitor numbers, encouraging longer stays, and maximising the wider economic benefits of inbound tourism."

Consolidated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2023				
	Shareholders RO	Participants		Total RO
		General Takaful RO	Family Takaful RO	
ASSETS				
Cash and cash equivalents	477,487	722,223	1,195,383	1,917,606
Financial asset at fair value through equity	-	-	440,368	440,368
Receivable from participants' fund	4,793,247	-	-	-
Takaful balance receivables	-	4,721,851	3,001,916	7,723,767
Retakaful balance receivables	-	6,469,755	231,245	6,701,000
Other receivables and takaful assets	1,052,483	880,669	272,084	1,152,753
Retakaful contract assets	-	3,774,131	10,769,528	14,543,659
Deferred policy acquisition costs	635,681	-	-	-
Wakalah bank deposits	6,904,000	1,500,000	7,500,000	9,000,000
Investment at amortised cost	2,000,000	-	4,651,750	4,651,750
Property and equipment	453,374	-	-	-
Intangible assets	463,508	-	-	-
Deferred tax asset	1,169,343	-	-	-
Right of use assets	1,487,277	-	-	-
Total assets	19,436,400	18,068,629	28,062,274	46,130,903
LIABILITIES, PARTICIPANTS' FUND AND EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Takaful liabilities	-	17,007,898	13,795,384	30,803,282
Payable to shareholders' fund-	-	916,677	3,876,570	4,793,247
Payable to retakaful	-	4,571,991	8,990,049	13,562,040
Accounts and other payables	537,145	1,466,445	2,410,879	3,877,324
Wakala financing	1,470,296	-	-	-
Deferred income from retakaful contracts	-	109,272	-	109,272
Employees' end of service benefits	109,546	-	-	-
Ijarah Liabilities	877,835	-	-	-
Total liabilities	2,994,822	24,072,283	29,072,882	53,145,165
Participants' fund				
Deficit in participants' fund	-	(6,003,654)	(1,048,025)	(7,051,679)
Equity				
Capital and reserves				
Share capital	16,000,000	-	-	-
Legal Reserve	1,436,739	-	-	-
Investment fair value reserve	-	-	37,417	37,417
Retained earnings	(6,995,161)	-	-	-
Total equity attributable to shareholders	10,441,578	-	37,417	37,417
Perpetual Sukuk eligible as additional capital	6,000,000	-	-	-
Total Equity	16,441,578	-	37,417	37,417
Total equity, participants' fund and liabilities	19,436,400	18,068,629	28,062,274	46,130,903
Net assets per share attributable to shareholders	0.0418			

Consolidated statement of participants' revenues and expenses for the year ended 31 December 2024			
	2024		
	General Takaful RO	Family Takaful RO	Total RO
Takaful revenue			
Gross contributions	22,497,643	17,739,739	40,237,382
Contributions ceded to retakaful	(7,825,653)	(7,967,653)	(15,793,308)
Net retained contributions	14,671,988	9,772,086	24,444,074
Movement in unearned contribution reserve - net	(199,022)	(3,546,682)	(3,745,704)
Income from retakaful contracts	413,272	340	413,612
Total takaful revenue	14,886,238	6,225,744	21,111,982
Takaful expenses			
Gross claims settled	(18,256,108)	(6,857,832)	(25,113,940)
Retakaful share in claim settled	5,884,575	5,498,740	11,383,315
Net claims settled	(12,371,533)	(1,359,092)	(13,730,625)
Movement in outstanding claims reserve - net	(621,746)	285,228	(336,518)
Income from other reserves	(441,711)	71,400	(370,411)
Net claims incurred	(13,434,990)	(1,002,564)	(14,437,554)
Other takaful expense	(704,136)	(33,521)	(737,657)
Wakala fee expense	(2,679,227)	(2,667,730)	(5,346,957)
Total takaful expenses	(16,818,353)	(3,703,815)	(20,522,168)
Other income	415,529	275,673	691,202
Investment income	303,710	470,757	774,467
Mudarib fees expense	(151,856)	(235,381)	(387,237)
(Deficit) / surplus from takaful operations	(1,364,732)	3,032,978	1,668,246
	2023		
	General takaful RO	Family takaful RO	Total RO
Takaful revenue			
Gross contributions	18,857,939	15,240,162	34,098,101
Contributions ceded to retakaful	(5,735,200)	(9,216,502)	(14,951,702)
Net retained contributions	13,122,739	6,023,660	19,146,399
Movement in unearned contribution reserve - net	(1,206,592)	(174,657)	(1,381,249)
Income from retakaful contracts	371,823	76,860	448,683
Total takaful revenue	12,287,970	5,925,863	18,213,833
Takaful expenses			
Gross claims settled	(18,377,469)	(4,052,359)	(22,789,828)
Retakaful share in claim settled	8,579,300	3,180,845	11,760,145
Net claims settled	(10,158,169)	(871,514)	(11,029,683)
Movement in outstanding claims reserve - net	(557,911)	(593,381)	(1,151,292)
Movement in other reserves	(310,478)	322,487	12,009
Net claims incurred	(11,026,558)	(1,142,408)	(12,168,966)
Other takaful expense	(380,137)	(31,648)	(411,785)
Takaful fee expense	(2,451,532)	(1,981,221)	(4,432,753)
Total takaful expenses	(13,858,227)	(3,155,277)	(17,013,504)
Other income	514,139	-	514,139
Investment income	77,322	330,789	408,111
Mudarib fees expense	(38,662)	(165,395)	(204,057)
(Deficit) / surplus from takaful operations	(1,017,458)	2,935,980	1,918,522

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

Global debt climbs to record \$318tn



Washington, US - The total amount of global debt rose to a record high of \$318tn last year, according to a report released by the Washington-based Institute of International Finance (IIF).

The global financial landscape is grappling with new challenges as nearly \$7tn was added to global debt in 2024, marking a new record annual high of \$318tn, the report reveals. The global debt-to-GDP ratio increased for the first time in four years, as GDP growth slowed and inflationary pressures eased.

While global debt soared by approximately \$15tn in 2023, the upward trend continued into 2024, with an additional \$7tn increase.

This surge in debt, although less than half the increase forecasted for 2023, has raised con-

Emerging markets played a crucial role, contributing approximately 65% of the global debt rise in 2024, with significant borrowing activity observed in China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey

cerns over fiscal sustainability amid persisting global economic uncertainties. The IIF specifically pointed out that fiscal deficits, especially in politically polarised countries, remain under intense scrutiny.

The global debt-to-GDP ratio climbed by over 1.5% compared to 2023, reaching nearly 328% of GDP, marking the first annual increase in debt ratios since 2020, according to the IIF report.

The IIF anticipates a deceleration in debt growth this year due to economic policy uncertainty and high borrowing costs.

However, factors such as calls for fiscal stimulus and elevated military expenditure in Europe could drive further increases.

Emerging markets played a crucial role, contributing approximately 65% of the global debt rise, with significant borrowing activity observed in China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey. These nations collectively face the daunting challenge of managing a record \$8.2tn in maturing debt this year, a portion of which is in foreign currency, posing potential risks to market stability.

Around 65% of the 2024 in-

crease in global debt came from emerging markets, primarily China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye. Meanwhile, debt accumulation in developed markets was mostly concentrated in the US, the UK, Canada, and Sweden.

Total debt in developed countries rose to \$214.3tn last year, while the combined debt of developing countries stood at \$103.7tn.

Household debt amounted to \$60.1tn last year, while public sector debt reached \$95.3tn. The debt of non-financial com-

panies stood at \$91.3tn, and the debts of financial institutions totalled \$71.4tn, according to the IIF.

The report also highlights the threats posed by heightened trade tensions and geopolitical decisions, such as those from the previous US administration, which have impacted liquidity and the ability of countries to manage foreign currency debt effectively. A strategic focus on domestic revenue generation has been cited as critical for building resilience against such external economic shocks.

Emphasising the need for innovative financing solutions, Emre Tiftik, IIF's Director of Sustainability Research, advocated for strengthening the capacity of multilateral development banks to harness private capital.



Oman launches digital platform to boost exports

Our Correspondent
Muscat

Oman's Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) has launched www.exports.om, a digital platform aimed at connecting Omani businesses with global markets and strengthening the country's non-oil export sector.

"Our SMEs have incredible potential in international markets," said H E Ibtisam al Farooji, Undersecretary for Investment Promotion at MoCIIP. "This new platform opens doors for them by providing the right tools, connections, and support to start exporting. We have built an e-marketplace where Omani businesses can reach buyers worldwide and access the guidance they need to succeed globally."

The Oman Export platform has been introduced as the country's non-oil trade reached \$14.6bn by the end of Q3 2024, accounting for 37.6% of the sultanate's total

trade. From Musandam to Dhofar, companies are exporting minerals, plastics, rubber, fish, foodstuffs, fragrances, textiles, industrial goods, and metals to over 130 countries, with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, India, the US, and South Korea as key markets.

Lubna al Harthy, Director of the Export Development Department at MoCIIP, described the platform's features, stating: "It will help businesses export more easily by providing certification assistance, licensing guidance, and market entry advice. The platform also includes an interactive map displaying shipping routes and key trade data."

"Companies using the platform can access a wealth of resources. It offers detailed market reports, export guides, and advice covering everything from documentation to logistics. In addition, our team of export specialists is on hand to provide personalised support at every step."

BP unveils multi-billion dollar deal to redevelop Iraq's oil fields

Hamish MacDonald

The agreement between BP and Iraq's government will focus on the redevelopment of four large oil and gas fields in Kirkuk in the north of the country.

The agreement follows a memorandum of understanding between BP and Iraq signed in July 2024 - of which technical terms were agreed in December and the majority of commercial terms agreed in January - together with previous work that BP has done on the fields in Kirkuk from 2013 to 2019.

The deal, which could be worth \$25bn over the lifetime of the project, comes as BP is set to row back on previous targets to cut oil and gas production by 2030.

It's also a major achievement of Iraq where output has been constrained by years of war, sectarian tensions and corruption.

In a statement BP said that the agreement was for an initial phase that would include oil and gas production of more than



three billion barrels of oil equivalent.

It includes the Baba and Avanah domes of the Kirkuk oil field and three adjacent fields: Bai Hassan, Jambur and Khabbaz.

BP added that the wider resource opportunity across the contract and surrounding area is believed to include up to 20bn barrels of oil equivalent.

BP executive vice president William Lin said, "This agreement builds on our longstanding and strategic relationship with

the Government of Iraq and delivers access to a material new resource opportunity, within one of the world's most prolific hydrocarbon provinces.

"It will enable us to bring our experience of managing giant fields to realise the potential of this important asset for Iraq."

He added, "This opportunity is fully in line with our priority of pursuing new growth opportunities for bp as we strengthen and high-grade our portfolio across the world."

(Source: Euronews.com)

Alibaba plans to invest \$52bn in AI

Nisha Gopalan

Chinese tech giant Alibaba Group announced plans to invest more than \$52bn in artificial intelligence and cloud infrastructure over the next three years.

In a post on its news site, the company said over the next three years it would spend at least 380bn yuan (\$52. bn) - an amount that would exceed the company's AI and cloud computing investment over the past decade. Alibaba said the investment "underscores the company's focus on AI-driven growth and its role as a leading global



cloud provider."

Alibaba CEO Eddie Wu had announced plans last week to "aggressively invest" in cloud and AI spending over the next three years but didn't give a specific amount.

Jefferies analysts, who have a "buy" rating and \$160 price target on Alibaba stock, noted that the investment "aligns with the earnings call last week and in line with street expectations."

(Source: Investopedia.com)



الشركة العالمية لإدارة الفنادق ش. م . م

Hotel Management Company International SAOG

THE CHEDI, MUSCAT شيدى ، مسقط

ص.ب: 964 الخوير - الرمز البريدي 133 ، سلطنة عمان

P. O. Box 964, P.C. 133, Al Khuwair, Sultanate of Oman

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Annual General Meeting of the Hotels Management Company International SAOG. I would also like to avail this opportunity to present to you the annual report of HMCI S.A.O.G. for the year ended December 31st, 2024.

During 2024 the Company has achieved the following accomplishments:

The company has generated total revenues of RO.7,862 million (vs. the previous year's RO.7,564 million) which shows an increase in revenue of 4%.

The company made a Net profit after the taxation provision of RO.159 thousand (vs. the previous year's Net profit of RO.32 thousand) which is an increase of 396%.

Achievement:

- The No.1 hotel in the Middle East - Condé Nast Traveller's 2024 Readers' Choice Awards
- Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year (2024) in Oman - Travel & Hospitality Awards
- Oman's Leading Luxury Resort 2024 - World Travel Awards
- Best Luxury International Cuisine in Muscat, Oman for 2024 - Luxury Lifestyle Awards
- The Chedi Muscat Hotel was the only hotel in Sultanate of Oman recognized by Forbes Travel Guide in 2024.
- Best of the Best Hotels - TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards 2024
- The best hotels in the Middle East - Condé Nast Traveller's 2024 Readers' Choice Awards
- Oman's Best Beach Restaurant 2024 - World Culinary Awards
- Oman's Best Resort Spa 2024 - World Spa Awards
- American Express Fine Hotels + Resorts Card Member Favourite in Oman and the region for 2024.
- The Chedi Muscat has been honored with the Al Roya Business Award 2024 in the Luxury Hotels category.
- The Best Overseas Hotel Award 2024 - City Traveler Awards
- World's Leading Luxury Beach Resort & Spa 2024 - World Travel Awards held in Portugal.
- Highlighted in Tatler 2024 Spa Guide—a trusted directory based in UK spotlighting the best in wellness worldwide.

Outlook

- The Chedi closed 2024 on a high by achieving all Key performance indicators and being the number one 5-star hotel in Muscat on TripAdvisor. This showcases the hotel's commitment to its shareholders and patrons.
- The Festive Season concluded with an overall performance by all departments, surpassing their own achievement at the same time last year. Despite more inventory and new hotels opening up, The Chedi managed to maintain its market share.
- Focusing on delivering high service standards and not compromising the quality of services and products helped the hotel maintain its position and loyal clients.
- Business on the books moving forward looks quite promising, especially at the start of the year. Considering the tiny booking windows we have observed since COVID-19, the overall pace of business is encouraging.
- The hotel will redefine its various F&B concepts to keep up with regional and international trends. For rooms, we will expand into new markets that were previously considered secondary.
- This year, we will take a new approach by collaborating with new partners globally and identifying and partnering with new consortiums in key feeder markets.
- It will strengthen its efforts in the regional market to maintain the hotel as a quintessential Omani resort and highlight its uniqueness.
- One key approach for 2025 will be identifying the new luxury travel behavior and adapting and designing accommodation packages to meet these trends.
- The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism of Oman has a new team focusing on international markets. This team showcases Oman as an authentic and unique Arabian destination by participating in various shows, working with major partners in key feeder markets, and working with PR agencies to get adequate coverage in these markets. The Chedi will collaborate in all these endeavors to support and make these events successful.

Appreciation

The members of the Board of Directors join me in acknowledging sincere thanks to our valued guests and shareholders for their continuous confidence in our hotel.

We wish to convey our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion, the Financial Services Authority, and Muscat Exchange for their prudent supervising and guidance on our endeavors.

We salute and pledge our allegiance to His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said as he takes the country on continued progress and prosperity.

The Chairman
Hotels Management Company International SAOG

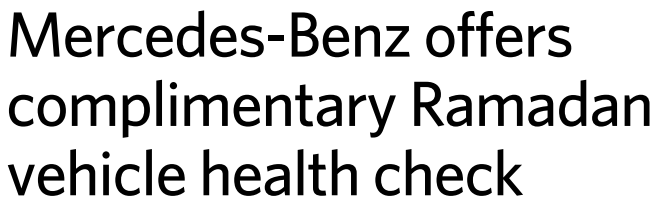
UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	31-Dec 2024	31-Dec 2023
Non-current Assets	4,863,666	6,328,401
Property, plant and equipment	4,758,701	5,475,876
Fixed deposits – long term	–	681,074
Deferred tax Asset	104,965	171,451
Current Assets	3,968,100	4,962,462
Inventories	368,018	414,395
Debtors and Prepayments	1,077,432	1,411,832
Due from related parties	6,144	12,216
Fixed deposit	1,381,075	1,750,000
Bank and cash	1,135,431	1,374,019
Total assets	8,831,7661	1,290,863
Current Liabilities	1,631,552	2,690,769
Current portion of term loan	–	1,050,000
Creditors and Accruals	37,103	48,383
Due to related parties	1,594,449	1,592,386
Income Tax payable	0	0
Non-current liabilities	714,698	2,273,411
Term Loan	350,000	1,750,000
End of service benefits	364,698	523,411
Total liabilities	2,346,250	4,964,180
Net assets	6,485,516	6,326,683
Equity		
Share capital	3,000,000	3,000,000
Legal reserve	1,000,000	1,000,000
Retained earnings/(accumulated losses)	2,485,516	2,326,683
Total equity	6,485,516	6,326,683

UNAUDITED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2024

	31-Dec 2024	31-Dec 2023
Turnover/ Revenue	7,861,520	7,563,760
Operating costs	(6,730,523)	(6,699,477)
Operating profit	1,130,997	864,283
Administration & selling expense	(688,399)	(624,798)
Impairment loss/reversal of loss on trade receivables	(33,762)	12,263
Management & licence fees	(245,328)	(230,505)
Net Operating Profit	163,508	21,243
Interest expense	118,340	178,463
Interest income	(72,651)	(164,116)
Insurance claims	–	2,770
Profit on disposal of property, plant and equipment	16,122	18,204
Profit for the period	225,319	56,564
Taxation	(66,486)	(24,385)
Profit after tax provision	158,833	32,179
Earnings per share	0.053	0.011

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

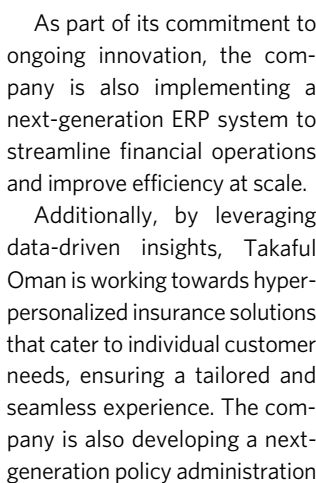


'At Mercedes-Benz, customer care is an integral part of our brand's identity. We believe that luxury is not only reflected in the vehicles we create but in the entire ownership experience we offer', the company stated.

'Our commitment to excel-

This offer is available on models registered before Jan 1, 2022.

Its digital-first approach aligns with Oman Vision 2040, reinforcing its role in driving financial technology and national economic progress.



Commenting on these advancements, Sulaiman Hamed al Harthi, Board Chairman of Takaful Oman Insurance SAOG, stated, "Innovation is embedded in our approach. Our digital transformation is not just about operational improvements - it is about equipping our customers with secure, efficient and transparent insurance solutions tailored to their evolving needs."

Echoing this commitment, Neelmani Bhardwaj, Chief Executive Officer of Takaful Oman Insurance SAOG, added, "Our digital transformation is a testament to our relentless focus on customer experience. We are building an ecosystem where ease of access and security are paramount. This evolution cements our leadership in digital in-

Takaful Oman's digital innovations include iCAS (Intelligent Claims Administration System), an integrated claims registration system that has significantly reduced claim processing time by over 50% and a live video streaming tool for vehicle inspections, eliminating the need for physical assessments while improving accuracy and reducing costs.

Toyota Oman offers an impressive line-up of vehicles to suit every kind of driver. From the iconic Camry, celebrated for its refined design and hybrid efficiency, to the all-new Land

Since 1982, the Camry has won over drivers worldwide with its refined design, superb performance, and top-notch quality. The new Camry is available with a choice of two engines: a powerful 2.5-liter four-cylinder en-

The legendary Toyota Land Cruiser is the perfect vehicle to

The new Prado fuses its renowned Land Cruiser heritage with modern tech to tackle off-road challenges and daily drives with ease. The latest model introduces electric power steering for greater control and less road impact. Drivers can choose between a 2.4-liter turbo petrol or a 2.8-liter turbo diesel engine,

A trusted companion for every journey, the Corolla balances power, fuel efficiency, and advanced safety features.

Judge orders Trump administration to release withheld foreign aid fund

A federal judge ruled that the administration must distribute millions of dollars to several nonprofit groups, saying the government had violated the terms of a temporary restraining order issued two weeks earlier blocking the suspension of foreign aid.

Washington, D.C., US - A federal judge ruled on Tuesday that the Trump administration must distribute millions of dollars to several nonprofit groups, saying the government had violated the terms of a temporary restraining order issued two weeks earlier blocking the suspension of foreign aid.

Judge Amir Ali, appointed during the Biden era, sharply criticised Trump administration lawyers for failing to compensate these groups for work completed before President Donald Trump's January 20 executive order freezing foreign aid for 90 days. He reaffirmed his February 13 restraining order, requiring payment by 11.59pm on Wednesday, as reported by ABC News.

The January 20 order was controversial and sent shockwaves to groups providing aid



The January 20 executive order was controversial and sent shockwaves to groups providing aid worldwide and they have fought the order fiercely

worldwide. Aid groups have fought the order fiercely, saying the Trump administration lacks the authority to cut off funds approved by the US Congress, which under the Constitution has the 'power of the purse'.

At Tuesday's two-hour hearing, Ali said the plaintiffs provided evidence showing the government had 'not lifted the suspension or freeze of funds' as required by the temporary re-

straining order. He added that the government had 'not rebutted that evidence' and failed to give 'any specific examples of unfreezing funds' under the court's restraining order when asked.

Justice Department lawyers admitted that the Trump administration disregarded the order, which barred them from freezing foreign aid funds. However, they argued that repayment should not be required, citing 'sovereign

immunity', the argument that the sovereign of a state can commit no wrong. A sovereign would usually be a king or queen, not the US president, whose power is constitutionally constrained by the checks and balances of the courts and Congress.

Judge presses for 'straight answer'

During a sometimes heated exchange with Ali, a government

lawyer had difficulty answering questions about the Trump administration's compliance with the temporary restraining order, which barred the freezing of funds.

"I'm not sure why I can't get a straight answer from you on this," Ali said sharply. "Are you aware of an unfreezing of the disbursement of funds for those contracts and agreements that were frozen before February 13? Are you

aware of steps taken to actually release those funds?"

The lawyer responded: "I'm not in a position to answer that."

Voicing frustration, Ali pressed further: "We're 12 days in (from the order) and you're here representing the government ... and you can't answer me whether any funds that you've kind of acknowledged are covered by the court's order have been unfrozen?"

The lawyer tried to deflect, saying that 'preparations are underway' for a report on the government's compliance.

Later in the hearing, when the lawyer tried to justify the administration's failure to comply, Ali shot back that the terms of the order were 'clear as day'.

He added that Tuesday's hearing was meant to understand and hear arguments on the motion to enforce the restraining order, not to re-litigate the order.

The Justice Department filed a notice of appeal later on Tuesday.

A lawyer representing the nonprofits accused the Trump administration of ignoring the court order by failing to take any steps to release the funds. The court's discussion with the government showed they had 'done nothing to make the flow of payments happen'.

Anadolu Agency



UN Secretary General to visit Bangladesh amid tensions

Dhaka, Bangladesh - The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is likely to visit Bangladesh in mid-March amid political tensions in the South Asian country, officials said.

UN Special Envoy on Myanmar Julie Bishop had visited Bangladesh ahead of the Secretary General visit. The UN chief will also visit the Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar, Bishop said during her meeting with Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus at the State Guest House Jamuna.

"UN Secretary General will visit Bangladesh. We are still working out his final programmes," Md Touhid Hossain, Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Adviser, told the reporters without elaborating.

"The three-day trip will start from March 13," a source told ANI. The upcoming visit of the UN chief is considered very significant amid the political and security tensions in Bangladesh.

ANI

Chile declares state of emergency after major blackout

Santiago, Chile - Chilean President Gabriel Boric declared a state of emergency on Tuesday after a massive blackout impacted 19mn people.

In an address to the nation, Boric said the outage affected eight million homes and held private companies responsible for the disruption. "What happened today is outrageous because it's not tolerable that one or several

companies impact the everyday life of millions of Chileans... it's the state's duty to hold them responsible," Boric added.

The president noted that the state of emergency was necessary to guarantee the safety of citizens, given the possibility of the outage continuing for longer.

The Chilean government also announced a curfew from 10pm Tuesday to 6am Wednesday



(0100 to 0900GMT).

Earlier, Interior Minister Carolina Toha called for calm, saying the outage was not due to an attack but a disconnection in the transmission system in the Norte Chico region.

"I call for calm, to understand that it is a failure in the system, that we are not the object of an attack, that the service should be restored promptly," she said.

Through social media, Ernesto Huber, executive director of the National Electricity Coordinator, confirmed the source of the blackout as a fault in the power grid at Norte Chico and said that efforts are underway to restore power.

"The disconnection of the 500 KV double circuit in the Norte Chico area, specifically between the Vallenar and Coquimbo

power stations, caused a disturbance in the national electrical system, from Arica to the Los Lagos region, resulting in the complete loss of power in the national electrical system," he said.

The outage occurred amid a heat wave in Chile, and in small towns such as Lo Barnechea, Taglagante and La Florida, authorities promptly established supplies of drinking water.

Minerals deal a 'framework' for larger agreement: Zelensky ahead of US visit

Kyiv, Ukraine - After lengthy discussions, Ukraine's cabinet is set to recommend a US minerals deal, according to unnamed Ukrainian officials.

President Volodymyr Zelensky is likely to travel to Washington on Friday to meet US President Donald Trump to sign the deal.

Zelensky has told reporters that a proposed minerals deal with the United States is a starting point for a wider agreement.

"This is just a start, a framework, it can be a big success," Zelensky said. "The success will depend on our conversation with President Trump."

Kyiv hopes for security guarantees from Washington, which have reportedly not been given, to deter Russia from further military action in Ukraine.

"I wanted to have a sentence on security guarantees for Ukraine, and it's important that it's there," Zelensky said.

Zelensky added that he hoped to travel to Washington on Friday to discuss a natural resources deal and future aid with US President Trump and planned to ask Trump if he would halt future US aid for Ukraine.

"I would like to have this visit very much," Zelensky said, explaining that Friday was the tentative date for the visit.

The success of a potential deal would 'depend on our con-



Kyiv hopes for security guarantees from Washington, which have reportedly not been given

Zelensky said he hoped to travel to Washington on Friday to discuss a natural resources deal and future aid with US President Trump and planned to ask Trump if he would halt future US aid for Ukraine

versation with President Trump', Zelensky added.

The key details of the rare mineral agreement between the United States and Ukraine remain largely unreleased.

Initially, Trump had demanded compensation in the range of US\$500bn for the aid the US had provided under the Biden administration since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in

February 2022.

According to the Kiel Institute, a German economic research body, that would be around four times the amount the US had sent to Ukraine - estimated at around US\$120bn.

However, Ukrainian officials anonymously told the AFO news agency that demand had been dropped from the most recent draft document.

Zelensky had previously raised the idea of exchanging access to Ukrainian natural resources for security commitments in October 2024.

Ukraine remains steadfast that any deal must include long-term and robust security guarantees that would deter Russia from attacking again.

The text of the agreement on minerals may yet include a reference to Ukrainian security - possibly without concrete guarantees. Discussions on this point are reportedly still underway, according to Reuters news agency. Ukraine has 20% of the world's estimated resources of graphite.

DW



شركة التغليف المحدودة (ش.م.ع.م.)
Packaging Co. Ltd. (SAOC)

INVITATION TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL/
EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of Packaging Co Ltd (SAOC) is pleased to invite the shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting, scheduled on Thursday 13 March 2025, at 5:00 pm via the electronic platform which can be accessed through www.mcd.om the official website of Muscat Clearing and Depository Company. If the quorum requirement for holding AGM & EGM is not fulfilled, a second Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting will be held on Sunday 16 March 2025 at 5:00 pm through the online platform mentioned above, to discuss following agenda:

• **EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING:**

1. To consider and approve reduction in board members from Seven to Three.

2. To consider and approve company's amended Articles of Association (as per attached annexure).

• **THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

1. To consider and approve the Chairman's Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

2. To consider and approve the Auditor's report, Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss account for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

3. To inform the association of the related party transaction during the financial year 2024. (as per attached annexure).

4. To inform the association of the related party transaction forecast during the financial year 2025 (as per attached annexure).

5. To elect a new Board of Directors for the Company from amongst Shareholders or non-shareholders. Any person who wishes to be nominated to the Board of members Directors of the Company is required to fill in a Director's Nomination Form. Such a form can be obtained from the Company. The completed form should be delivered to the Company at least five (5) days prior to the date of the Annual Ordinary General Meeting of the Company (no later than the end of the business hours on Thursday 06 March 2025). The candidate must satisfy the company's board membership requirements.

6. To appoint the auditors for the financial year 2025 and to approve their remuneration.

According to the Company's Articles of Association and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology, we would like to draw your attention to the following:

1. Legal person, exclusively, has the right to delegate a natural person to attend the General Meeting and vote on its behalf through technical means, provided that this natural person has an investor number in MCD.

2. Voting on any of the agenda items begins no more than three days before the date of the General Meeting until the voting process ends on the day of the General Meeting. If the shareholder's shares are increased or decreased, the voting process will be canceled, and the shareholder will have to vote again on the day of the General Meeting.

For further information please contact on telephone No 99434183 or email: jasim@packoman.com.

Chairman

Legal adviser

External Auditor



Discovery suggests Mars was once far wetter

Mars once had oceans, beaches similar to Earth’s, says new study

Istanbul, Turkey - Subsurface data from Mars suggests the planet may have once featured oceans and beaches similar to Earth’s, according to a new study published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

An international team of scientists including researchers from Penn State University in the US and Guangzhou University in China uncovered hidden rock layers beneath Mars’ surface using data from the Zhurong rover, providing strong evidence of an ancient northern ocean.

“We’re finding places on Mars that used to look like ancient beaches and ancient river deltas. We found evidence for wind, waves, no shortage of sand - a proper vacation-style beach,” said Benjamin Cardenas, assistant professor of geology at Penn State and a co-author of the study.

When the team examined radar data, they discovered layered structures resembling

Earth’s beaches, known as ‘fore-shore deposits’, which form when tides and waves carry sediments into large bodies of water.

“This immediately caught our attention, as it suggests the presence of waves, indicating a dynamic interaction between air and water,” said Cardenas.

Cardenas noted that comparing Martian radar data with Earth’s coastal deposits revealed striking similarities, with the dip angles on Mars matching those found in coastal sediments on Earth.

He added that the discovery suggests Mars was once far wetter, supporting the theory of a vast ocean in the planet’s northern hemisphere.

The study also provides fresh insights into Mars’ environmental history, indicating a long period of warm and wet conditions that could have lasted millions of years and potentially supported life.

Anadolu Agency

Germany's Merz to intensify coalition dialogue with SPD

Friedrich Merz said he wishes to form a government by Easter, April 20

Berlin, Germany - Friedrich Merz, the leader of Germany’s conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU), said on Tuesday that he would intensify coalition talks with the centre-left Social Democratic Party (SPD).

Speaking to reporters along with Markus Soder, head of the Christian Social Union (CSU), the CDU’s Bavarian sister party, Merz said that coalition talks with the SPD have begun and that he expects them to intensify in the coming days.

Reiterating that he wishes to form a government by Easter, April 20, Merz said there are various topics, ranging from security to immigration and the economy.

He said the global situation is changing dramatically day by day, which requires a capable German government.

Merz also expressed optimism that his party can reach a good coalition agreement in ‘a short time’ with the SPD.

His conservative CDU/CSU alliance won 28.5% of the vote in Sunday’s general election, securing a clear lead over other parties but falling short of an absolute majority in parliament needed to govern alone. The Social Democrats, despite receiving their lowest historical vote share of 16.4%, have emerged as a viable coalition partner. Together, two parties would hold 328 seats in the Bundestag, surpassing the 316-seat majority threshold.

New, controversial AfD faces

Having won just over 20% of the vote in Sunday’s federal election, the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party will have ap-



Friedrich Merz, the leader of Germany’s conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU)

conservative CDU/CSU alliance won 28.5% of the vote in Sunday’s general election, securing a clear lead over other parties but falling short of an absolute majority in parliament needed to govern alone

proximately twice as many seats in the country’s new parliament. That means a raft of new faces - but also some controversial old

figures whose previous comments on Germany’s Nazi past were too revisionist and too extreme even for the AfD.

Krah, a former lead AfD candidate in European elections, was banned from campaigning by his own party in 2024 after telling an Italian newspaper that ‘not everyone in the SS’ - the Nazi paramilitary organisation which was chiefly responsible for carrying out the Holocaust during the Sec-

ond World War - ‘was automatically a criminal’.

He was then placed under investigation over ‘alleged payments’ received from Russian and Chinese sources.

Helferich, meanwhile, is on the record as having described himself in WhatsApp messages as ‘the friendly face of national socialism’ and ‘democratic Freisler’ - a reference to Roland Freisler, a senior Nazi lawyer who took part in the 1942 Wannsee Conference at which the ‘Final Solution to the Jewish Question’ was discussed, leading to the ramping up of the Holocaust.

After meeting his new parliamentary colleagues this week, Helferich told reporters that he wanted to be on the culture select committee in order to carry out ‘patriotic cultural politics’ and encourage ‘a positive approach to nation and people’.

Sebastian Münzenmaier, vice-chairman of the AfD’s parliamentary grouping and a close ally of party leader Alice Weidel, said: “I consider Matthias (Helferich) a very good speaker. He is intelligent and smart and does good work.”

Meanwhile, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Wednesday that Friedrich Merz has expressed ‘aggressive views’ regarding Russia and the current geopolitical situation in Europe.

“He has specific approaches to Russia,” he told reporters at a press conference in Qatar.

“For instance, unlike (outgoing) Chancellor (Olaf) Scholz, he has insisted on sending long-range Taurus missiles to Ukraine for attacks deep into the territory of the Russian Federation.”

Agencies

PO Box: 1935, PC: 114, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
website www.mcdcoman.com



MUSCAT CITY
DESALINATION
COMPANY SAOG

Notice and Invitation to attend the Annual General Meeting

The Board of Directors of Muscat City Desalination Company S.A.O.G (the Company) has the pleasure to invite all the Shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Company scheduled to be held at 5 p.m. on Sunday, 23 March 2025 via the electronic platform for holding General Meetings, in which you can login through the website of Muscat Clearing and Depository Company (MCD) (www.mcd.gov.om); and in the event that quorum was not achieved for the AGM, the second AGM shall be held at 5 p.m. on Sunday, 30 March 2025 at the same electronic platform above to discuss the following agenda items:

1. To consider and approve the report of the Board of Directors on the business of the Company and its financial position for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

2. To consider and approve the Company's Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

3. To consider and approve the Auditors Report on the Company's audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

4. To approve the sitting fees payable to the members of the Board of Directors and members of the Board's sub-committees for financial year ended 31 December 2024 and to fix the sitting fees for the financial year ending 31 December 2025.

5. To notify the general meeting regarding the related parties' transactions during the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

6. To consider and approve transactions to be conducted with related parties during the financial year ending 31 December 2025 and authorise the Board and executive management to undertake the necessary steps to implement the transactions.

7. To notify the general meeting of the amounts spent for the Company's social responsibility activities for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.

8. To consider and approve the proposal of allocating RO 8,000 for corporate social responsibility activities for the financial year ending 31 December 2025.

9. To authorise the Board to determine and distribute cash dividends in May and November 2025, out of retained earnings of the Company as reflected in the Company's audited financial statements for the financial year ended 31 December 2024, provided that the aggregate amount of the dividend shall not exceed Baiza 5.143 per share, to the shareholders of the Company who are registered in the Company shareholders' register at the Muscat Clearing & Depository Company SAOC ("MCD") as at a date to be determined by the Board.

10. To approve the appointment of the statutory auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2025 and the proposed remuneration.

11. To elect new members to the Board of Directors to fill the vacancies (from the shareholders and/or non-shareholders). Anyone who wishes to nominate himself/herself for the position must complete the election form, which was made for this purpose and can be obtained from the Financial Services Authority (FSA) website and should be in compliance with the Company's Articles of Association and FSA regulations and submit it to the Company at its Head Office Building at least 5 working days prior to the AGM date and that is before the end of the working day 4 pm on Sunday 16 March 2025. No nomination form will be accepted after that date.

As per the Company's Articles of Association, the regulations of the convening of the AGMs through electronic platforms, issued by the FSA, we would like to attract your kind attention to the following:

1. Only juristic persons may deputize a natural person to attend the AGM and vote on their behalf through the electronic systems, provided that the deputized natural person has an investor number at Muscat Clearing and Depository Company.

2. Voting on the subject items offered for voting in the agenda starts before a period of not more than 3 days and until the end of the voting process on the AGM's day. If the investor's balance of shares increased or decreased during, his/her voting will be cancelled and they should vote again on the AGM's date.

For any queries please contact Malaak Al Balushi on +968 9389 2854 or e-mail at: malaak.albalushi@dentons.com

Chairman

Legal Advisor

Auditor



US President Donald Trump

Trump replaces EB-5 investor visa with new \$5mn Gold Card

Washington, D.C., US - US President Donald Trump is ending the EB-5 investor visa programme for foreigners, which grants permanent residency, and has announced the launch of a new ‘Trump Gold Card’ worth US\$5mn.

Trump made the announcement on Tuesday at the Oval Office, stating that the card will provide holders with Green Card privileges and serve as a pathway to US citizenship.

“Wealthy people will be coming into our country by buying this card. They’ll be wealthy and they’ll be successful, and they’ll be spending a lot of money and paying a lot of taxes and employing a lot of people,” he said.

The programme could start in two weeks.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick described the EB-5 programme as an underpriced way to obtain a Green Card, adding that under the new system, qualifying individuals will pay

US\$5mn to the US government.

“They’ll have to go through vetting, of course, but to make sure they’re wonderful world-class global citizens, they can come to America,” said Lutnick.

Asked if a Russian oligarch will be eligible for a gold card, Trump responded: “Yeah, possibly. I know some Russian oligarchs, they are a very nice people.”

The EB-5 investor visa currently grants a Green Card to those who invest a minimum of US\$800,000 in a US commercial enterprise that creates at least 10 jobs for US citizens.

Meanwhile, a member of the US Congress from Donald Trump’s party is proposing a US\$250 bill featuring a picture of the president. “Grateful to announce that I am drafting legislation to direct the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to design a US\$250 bill featuring Donald J Trump,” Joe Wilson, a South Carolina lawmaker, said on X.

Anadolu Agency

Russian, US diplomats to meet in Istanbul

Moscow, Russia - Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced on Wednesday that a meeting between Russian and US representatives to discuss embassy operations will take place on Thursday in Istanbul.

“We announced that our diplomats and high-level experts would meet and consider the systemic problems that had accumulated as a result of the illegal activities of the previous (US) administration to create artificial obstacles to the activities of the Russian Embassy, to which we naturally reciprocated and also created uncomfortable conditions for the work of the American Embassy in Moscow,” the minister said speaking at a press briefing in Doha, Qatar.

Turning to the Israeli-Palestinian settlement, Lavrov said Moscow is deeply concerned that the Israeli army continues to take actions that go beyond the ceasefire agreement, creating tensions on the ground.

According to Lavrov, Russia and Qatar support progress toward the establishment of a Palestinian state, while viewing the resettlement of Palestinians in the region.



Tunisia: 8 get death penalty for murder of opposition figure

Tunis, Tunisia - A Tunisian court on Tuesday sentenced eight defendants to death over the accusation of murdering Mohamed Brahmi, a leftist opposition figure in 2013.

The Tunisian state news agency quoted a statement by a court spokesman as saying that three defendants also received additional death sentences for what he said was 'deliberate participation in premeditated murder'.

Charges against them also included 'attempting to change the state's nature' and 'inciting for killing and armed conflict'.

A ninth convict, who is on the run, was sentenced to five years in prison, 'for failing to report to the authorities what he had of information about terrorist crimes', the Tunisian broadcaster added.

On July 25, 2013, politician Mohamed Brahmi, the leader of the Movement of the People Party, was shot dead outside his house.

His assassination at that time triggered a political crisis in the country.

Tunisia has been in the throes of a deep political crisis that has aggravated the country's economic conditions since 2021 when Tunisian President Kais Saied ousted the government and dissolved parliament.

While Saied accuses his opponents - mainly the En-

Sudan: More than 40 killed in plane crash

Khartoum, Sudan - At least 46 people were killed, with the death toll expected to rise, after a military plane crashed Omdurman, Sudan, on Wednesday.

The crash in Omdurman, across river from the capital, Khartoum, reportedly killed military personnel as well as civilians.

"Search efforts are still ongoing to find the remaining martyrs under the rubble," the Health Ministry said in a statement.

They added that the incident occurred near Wadi Seidna air base, and involved an Antonov aircraft. Military sources told the Reuters news agency that technical failure was the likely cause of the crash.

DW

nahda Movement - of conspiring against the state and being behind the country's crises, the opposition accuses him of persecuting opposition figures, especially those who oppose the measures he imposed on the country in July 2021.

Anadolu Agency

Hamas to hand over remains of four Israeli captives today

Gaza City/Jerusalem - The Palestinian resistance group Hamas said on Wednesday that it will hand over the remains of four Israeli captives on Thursday in exchange for Israel's release of hundreds of prisoners.

"The resistance will hand over the bodies of four Israeli captives on Thursday, in parallel with Israel's release of the delayed batch of Palestinian prisoners, along with corresponding Palestinian women and children," Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem told Anadolu.

He confirmed that 'clear guarantees' had been secured from mediators and that a new mechanism was agreed upon to ensure Israel fulfills its commitments. However, he did not disclose details of the mechanism.

Abdel Latif al-Qanoua, another Hamas spokesman, said in a statement that the exchange would proceed 'under a new mechanism guaranteeing Israel's compliance'.

"Egyptian mediators have secured this agreement, and we remain committed to completing and enforcing it," he added.

Following this exchange, all prisoner releases under the first phase of the Gaza ceasefire and prisoner swap agreement will be completed.

The first phase includes the release of 33 Israeli captives and



The resistance will hand over the bodies of four Israeli captives on Thursday, in parallel with Israel's release of the delayed batch of Palestinian prisoners

HAZEM QASSEM

1,737 Palestinian prisoners in stages over six weeks.

Israel has refused to release 620 Palestinian prisoners in return for four bodies of Israeli captives on Saturday, citing what it called the 'degrading handover ceremonies' of hostages.

The ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement has been in place in Gaza since last month, pausing Israel's destructive war that has killed nearly 48,350 people, mostly women and children, and left the enclave in ruins.

Earlier on Tuesday Hamas had

said that its delegation led by senior official Khalil al-Hayya, met with Egyptian officials to discuss the implementation of the ceasefire and prisoner exchange agreement as well as preparations for the next phase of negotiations. The group emphasised the need for full and precise adherence to all terms of the deal.

An Israeli official confirmed late on Tuesday that an understanding had been reached with Hamas to resolve the delay in releasing Palestinian prisoners.

"The Egyptian mediation has succeeded...An agreement was

reached to resolve the issue of the delayed release of Palestinian prisoners," the unnamed official told Israel's Channel 13.

"If there are no last-minute changes, the remains of four Israeli hostages will be returned on Wednesday night without a formal ceremony, and Palestinian prisoners will be released gradually from Israeli prisons," the official added.

The first phase of the ceasefire deal in Gaza began on January 19, spanning three stages, each lasting 42 days.

Anadolu Agency

'UN is not the Bible', Rwanda to contest its reports: FM

Ankara, Turkey - 'The UN is not the Bible', and Rwanda will contest its reports, the foreign minister has said over the country's alleged support to M23 rebels fighting in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

"We contested those reports several times. It is not the Bible when the UN says something, the UN is not the Bible.



"We contested those reports, and we have been protecting ourselves for 30 years now since the threat has persisted since the genocide against the Tutsi," Olivier Nduhungirehe told the Swiss broadcaster RTS on Tuesday. The Rwandan minister criticised Congo for trying to topple the government in his country, and blamed President Felix

Tshisekedi for forming an international coalition of Burundi, Southern Africa soldiers, and 'even European mercenaries'.

"We do not fear being diplomatically isolated, we do not fear sanctions. What we would fear is to leave our country and our population defenceless," he added.

Anadolu Agency

Israel conducts airstrikes in Damascus, southern Syria

Damascus/Jerusalem - Israel carried out airstrikes late on Tuesday on several locations in the Damascus countryside and Daraa province in southern Syria.

Israeli warplanes targeted the Al-Kiswah area south of Damascus and Izraa in Daraa with at least four airstrikes, according to an Anadolu correspondent.

One strike reportedly hit a weapons depot in Al-Kiswah, igniting a fire at the scene.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz confirmed the strikes, warning that 'any attempt by Syrian regime forces and the country's terrorist organisations to establish themselves in the security zone in southern Syria will be met with fire'.

Katz said 'the air force is currently striking southern Syria as part of our new policy to clear the area of weapons. The message is clear: we will not allow southern Syria to become southern Lebanon'.

"We will not endanger the security of our citizens," he added. The Israeli army said it carried out airstrikes on military targets in southern Syria, 'including command centres and multiple sites containing weapons', according to a statement released late on Tuesday.

The army claimed that the presence of military equipment and assets in southern Syria



'poses a threat to the citizens of Israel', vowing 'to operate in order to remove any threat'.

Syrian authorities have not issued a response.

'Provocative escalation'

Meanwhile, Arab League Secretary-General Ahmed Aboul Gheit denounced on Wednesday Israeli airstrikes in Syria as a 'provocative escalation' that seeks to exploit Syria's political transition to establish 'an illegal and illegitimate reality'.

In a statement, Aboul Gheit called the strikes that targeted the towns of Al-Kiswah in Damascus countryside and Izraa in Daraa in southern Syria on Tuesday night a 'reckless provocation

and an escalation aimed at taking advantage of Syria's transition to impose an illegal and illegitimate reality'.

"Israel's occupation of any Syrian land is a violation of international law," he said, calling on the international community to take a clear stance against the 'unjustified aggression, which seeks to ignite regional tensions and obstruct Syria's political transition'. He reaffirmed the Arab League's solidarity with Syria in the face of Israeli attacks and 'blatant attempts to sow discord'.

After the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime in December, Israel expanded its occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights by seizing the demilitarised buffer zone,

a move that violated the 1974 disengagement agreement with Syria. Tel Aviv also intensified airstrikes targeting Syrian military positions across the country.

Israel's recent military advances in the Golan Heights, which it has occupied since 1967, have drawn condemnation from the UN and several Arab nations.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa met with Jordan's King Abdullah II in Amman on Wednesday on his first official visit to the kingdom.

A royal court statement said the Jordanian monarch welcomed the Syrian leader upon his arrival at Marka Airport in Amman.

Anadolu Agency

CONDOLENCES

The Chairman and employees of **Apex Press and Publishing** would like to express their condolences to Abhilash Cherian and his family for the loss of his father



V J Cherian

Velasseril house
Arppokara east p.o
Kotayam

MAY HIS SOUL REST IN ETERNAL PEACE

Eagles Sarr at Selhurst Park

Senegalese forward scores brace on his birthday as Crystal Palace thrash Aston Villa

London, England - Ismaila Sarr scored twice on his 27th birthday to help Crystal Palace to a deserved 4-1 Premier League victory over Aston Villa at Selhurst Park on Tuesday, putting a dent in the visitors' hopes of Champions League football next season.

Villa dropped to 10th place in the table with 42 points from 28 games, while Palace climbed to 12th with 36 points from 27.

Palace dominated the chances as they secured just a third home win of the campaign, with in-form striker Jean-Philippe Mateta and Eddie Nketiah also on target in a polished performance that was full of attacking threat.

Villa twice had the ball in the back of the net for goals that were ruled out for offside, but they did not create nearly enough in the final third and could only score what proved a consolation through Morgan Rogers.

Villa had two shots on target in the game and one resulted in their goal, but it was defensively where they struggled as they were cut open on numerous occasions by their hosts.

"The players did great, I was a bit surprised by their (Villa) system with a 3-4-3. But the players knew what to do and took their chances," Palace coach Oliver Glasner told TNT Sports.

"We knew how they (Villa) wanted to play, always finding the players in the pocket with short passes. But we did excellently, we kept them wide and were waiting for our situations and scored nice goals.



Ismaila Sarr of Crystal Palace celebrates after scoring against Aston Villa at Selhurst Park on Tuesday

"When it was 1-1 we stayed patient. It was about being aggressive and winning the duels."

Palace took the lead just before the half-hour mark. Villa goalkeeper Emi Martinez could only parry Chris Richards' header from a free kick and Senegalese forward Sarr had a simple tap-in from the rebound.

Robin Olsen replaced Martinez in goal for Villa at halftime and they were level seven minutes into the second period.

It was route one football as Olsen launched the ball forward, Watkins flicked it on and Rogers spun in the penalty-box and fired the ball low into the bottom right corner. Mateta restored the home side's lead with a thunder-

We knew how they (Villa) wanted to play, always finding the players in the pocket with short passes. But we did excellently, we kept them wide and were waiting for our situations

OLIVER GLASNER, CRYSTAL PALACE COACH

ous strike from the edge of the box for his eighth goal in as many Premier League games.

Ezri Konsa's looping header from a corner landed on top of the Palace crossbar, but it was the home side who extended their advantage. Sarr's volley from Daniel Munoz's cross was expertly steered past Olsen, before substitute Nketiah got in on the act with his first goal for the club, and first in the Premier League since October 2023.



Arminia Bielefeld's Marius Wörle celebrates his goal against Werder Bremen

Third-tier Bielefeld stun Bremen

Bielefeld, Germany - Third division Arminia Bielefeld stunned Bundesliga club Werder Bremen with a 2-1 victory in a major German Cup upset on Tuesday to reach the competition's semi-finals.

The hosts, who have now eliminated three Bundesliga clubs in a row following wins over Union Berlin and Freiburg in the previous rounds, went in front after Werder lost possession in their own half and Marius Wörle curled his shot in after 35 minutes.

Werder were two goals down six minutes later when defender Julian Malatini tried to clear a cross but the Argentine turned the ball into his own goal.

The visitors cut the deficit in the 56th with Oliver Burke's effort giving them hope, and they hit the crossbar in stoppage time through Amos Pieper's header.

Holders Bayer Leverkusen and VfB Stuttgart had already advanced to the last four.

Chelsea move up to fourth with win against Southampton

London, England - Chelsea thumped hapless Southampton 4-0 on Tuesday, with scorers from all over the pitch, to climb to fourth in the Premier League and keep the visitors pinned to the bottom of the table.

The win takes the west London side to 46 points, two points above Manchester City and Newcastle United who respectively play at Tottenham Hotspur and leaders Liverpool on Wednesday.

Southampton's 22nd defeat of the season leaves them 13 points from the safety zone, while Chelsea's win means they can hang on to hopes of Champions League football next season.

With no out-and-out striker because of an injury to Nicolas Jackson, Chelsea have been struggling for goals and needed defenders as well as forwards to step up.

They were in control from the start, though, and barely a



Chelsea's Christopher Nkunku celebrates with teammates after scoring against Southampton on Tuesday

minute after Aaron Ramsdale saved a Cole Palmer shot with his feet, Christopher Nkunku bundled the ball in at the back post after a corner and nod down from defender Tosin Adarabioyo.

France striker Nkunku then turned provider by slipping a neat pass to Chelsea's Portugal winger Pedro Neto who fired a powerful left-foot shot between Ramsdale and the near post.

Central defender Levi Colwill made it 3-0 just before halftime, heading down a Neto free kick, and Spain wing back Marc Cucurella converted a pinpoint pass from 19-year-old substitute and academy graduate Tyrrique George in the 78th.

Ramsdale made sharp saves in the last 10 minutes to deny Palmer and Enzo Fernandez or the score could have been more.

Chelsea had lost four of their previous five games in all competitions before Tuesday's match, dropping to seventh.



Brighton & Hove Albion's Danny Welbeck celebrates with Kaoru Mitoma after scoring against Bournemouth on Tuesday

Welbeck winner helps Brighton edge Bournemouth

Brighton, England - Brighton & Hove Albion striker Danny Welbeck made an instant impact off the bench by scoring the winner in his side's 2-1 home victory over Bournemouth in the Premier League on Tuesday as both sides chase European football for next season.

Welbeck had only been on the field two minutes when he ran onto Georginio Rutter's through ball and placed his shot beyond goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga and in off the post in the 75th.

Joao Pedro gave Brighton a 12th-minute lead with a penalty but Bournemouth, who could have gone into the top four with a win, levelled just past the hour with a superb curling effort from Justin Kluivert.

Brighton's fourth win in a row in all competitions lifted them to

eighth with 43 points from 27 games and firmly in the hunt for a European place. Bournemouth's third defeat in four league games left them in seventh place, above Brighton on goal difference.

In a congested upper half of the table, only five points separate Aston Villa in 10th from Nottingham Forest in third.

The 34-year-old Welbeck enjoyed a hot scoring streak in October but had not registered in his last 13 appearances for Brighton. But he chose the perfect time to end that drought.

"You always have to believe you can make an impact," Welbeck said. "Watching the game I was analysing where I could make a difference and when Georginio picked the ball up in midfield I knew he had the ability to slip it through."

Rodrigo Muniz goal helps Fulham beat Wolves

Wolverhampton, England - Fulham secured a 2-1 win at lowly Wolverhampton Wanderers in the Premier League on Tuesday to boost their hopes of European football, with Ryan Sessegnon giving them a first-minute lead before Rodrigo Muniz got the winner after the break.

Sessegnon put Fulham in front after 58 seconds, striking a low shot inside the far post after breaking down the left, before Joao Gomes blasted home an equaliser in the 18th minute.

However, Muniz restored Fulham's lead just after the restart with a chipped finish from the



Fulham's Rodrigo Muniz scores against Wolverhampton Wanderers

edge of the area.

"Of course the early goals (in each half) made an impact," Fulham manager Marco Silva told the BBC. "They made us play in a mid-block off the ball because when you're winning they have to come a bit more. We did control the second half in a different way to what we normally do."

Fulham, who have won three of their last four league games, rose to ninth on 42 points after 27 games, four points off the top four and two points behind fifth-placed Manchester City, who would visit Tottenham Hotspur on Wednesday.



Diego Simeone

Simeone thrilled with Atletico's 'gladiatorial spirit'

Barcelona, Spain - Atletico Madrid manager Diego Simeone was delighted with his team's fighting spirit as they clawed back from two goals down to get a last-gasp 4-4 draw at Barcelona in an action-packed first leg of their Copa del Rey semi-final on Tuesday.

Simeone celebrated on the sidelines when forward Alexander Sorloth scored the equalising goal in a counter attack in the third minute of added time to rescue his side. "What stands out most for me is this team's spirit. There is an incredible gladiatorial spirit by the players that is inspiring," the Argentinian told a press conference.

"Barcelona have extraordinary tools, but we have our own and we showed out there what we are made of.

"The celebration on the fourth goal was just an explosion of joy. The 4-2 scoreline seemed difficult to turn around and the courage of the players was incredible, to equalise and leave the tie level for the return leg on April 2.

"The team showed great character and worked a very strong match, always playing with the same mentality and

with an enormous spirit of competition."

Simeone said he was disappointed his defence conceded two goals from corners, mistakes that he said are unacceptable.

"It's impossible for a team

The 4-2 scoreline seemed difficult to turn around and the courage of the players was incredible, to equalise and leave the tie level for the return leg

DIEGO SIMEONE

like Barcelona to finish a match without scoring a goal but what bothers me is when they score two goals from set pieces. It's a matter of individual and collective efforts that we need to correct," Simeone said.

"However, the game was not an easy one to play, but the boys showed a competitive spirit that I am passionate about."



Lionel Messi

Messi fined for grabbing New York coach by the neck

New York, US - Inter Miami forward Lionel Messi has been fined an undisclosed amount for grabbing one of New York City FC's coaching staff on the neck after Saturday's MLS opener, the league said.

Video footage showed Messi approach the coach and grab the back of his neck, causing him to pull away from the eight-times Ballon d'Or winner after the 2-2

draw in Miami.

The fine was imposed by the MLS' Disciplinary Committee on Tuesday.

The top-flight North American league also fined Messi's teammate Luis Suarez on Tuesday for violating the same "face/head/neck of an opponent policy" during halftime, when he pinched the back of Norwegian defender Birk Risa's neck.

ATLETI FIGHTBACK STUN BARCELONA

Madrid side stage two-goal comeback to share the spoils in first leg of Cup semifinal

Barcelona, Spain - Atletico Madrid clawed back from two goals down to rescue a last-gasp 4-4 draw at Barcelona in a rip-roaring battle in the first leg of their Copa del Rey semi-final on Tuesday.

Atletico stunned the home side early on, taking a two-goal lead with Julian Alvarez opening the scoring inside the first minute and Antoine Griezmann extending their advantage five minutes later.

However, Barcelona fought back with goals by Pedri in the 19th minute and Pau Cubarsi in the 21st, before taking the lead through Inigo Martinez's header from a corner in the 41st minute.

Barca took control of proceedings and Robert Lewandowski made it 4-2 with a tap-in from close range after great individual work by Lamine Yamal in the 74th minute. But if Barca's fans were confident of taking a two-goal advantage into the second leg, Atletico had other ideas.

They struck back through Marcos Llorente in the 84th



Alexander Sorloth scores Atletico Madrid's equaliser in the third minute of stoppage time

minute and another goal on the counter by Alexander Sorloth in the third minute of stoppage time left it all square ahead of the return encounter on April 2. Barca were caught by surprise when Griezmann crossed for Alvarez to score the opener with a close-range volley 55 seconds after kickoff.

The Argentinian forward then returned the favour in the sixth

minute, curling a pass through to Griezmann, who beat the offside trap on a quick counter and extended Atletico's lead. Barcelona woke up and went on the attack, hitting Atletico with a two-punch combination to level the scores with two goals in two minutes.

Pedri delivered the first blow from inside the box in the 19th minute after Yamal worked his magic to play a brilliant pass to

Jules Kounde inside the box, who delivered the assist with a low cross to the middle. In the 21st minute, Raphinha lofted a cross to the far post where Cubarsi jumped higher than Pablo Barrios to head in the equaliser.

Barcelona turned the game around in the 41st minute, with Raphinha's corner from the right finding Martinez unmarked at the far post to head the ball in.

The home side came out strongly after the break but Atletico held on, with keeper Juan Musso producing a brilliant performance between the posts to keep them in the game.

But there was nothing he could do in the 74th minute when Yamal made another outstanding run inside the box before putting the ball on a plate for Lewandowski to tap in.

Flick 'frustrated but still happy with many things'

Barcelona, Spain - Barcelona manager Hansi Flick criticised his side's defending and lack of concentration after Atletico Madrid fought back from two goals down to rescue a last-gasp 4-4 draw in the first-leg of their Copa del Rey semi-final on Tuesday.

Flick said that conceding four goals should be unacceptable for a club like Barcelona and that his side must learn how to close out games properly.

"I have warned the players not to concede any chances. I'm disappointed with the result because it was good to see how we managed to fight back after conceding two goals early and, even after we opened a 4-2 lead, we created a lot of chances... But it was all in vain because in the last few minutes we let them back into it," Flick told Spanish public television TVE.

"We had chances to go to the second leg with an advantage. We will have to talk a lot in the changing room about the goals we conceded... We have to correct the mistakes. The team is very young, there is a lot of room



Hansi Flick

We will have to talk a lot in the changing room about the goals we conceded... We have to correct the mistakes

HANSI FLICK

for improvement, but that is no excuse. They scored four goals against us and it's just too much for our standards."

Flick praised Atletico's resilience and said that there were positives he could take from his side's performance, mainly in attack.

"I am frustrated but still happy with many things I saw in the game. But the conceded goals can't happen," Flick said.

"Atletico played very well, we faced a good and strong team that left it all out there. But I think we dominated the game for 80 minutes, but in the last few minutes we didn't defend well."

Arnautovic's dazzling strike helps Inter reach Coppa Italia semifinals

Milan, Italy - Inter Milan secured a commanding 2-0 victory at home against Lazio on Tuesday, with Marko Arnautovic producing a dazzling strike that sent them soaring into the Coppa Italia semi-finals.

The Austrian striker produced a goal-of-the-season contender six minutes before the break, firing home a perfectly struck volley that flew into the net from outside the box after a corner was headed clear.

Inter have become a regular fixture in the Coppa Italia semi-finals, reaching at least this stage in five of the last six seasons



Inter Milan's Marko Arnautovic scores against Lazio on Tuesday

and 30 times in total.

"What matters for Inter also matters for me.

"The most important thing is winning the match, and we are very happy," Arnautovic said as he downplayed his spectacular goal when speaking to Mediaset.

Lazio pressed in the second half to get an equaliser, with Gustav Isaksen nearly scoring just before the hour mark from a tight angle, but Inter keeper Josep Martinez kept out the attempt with his foot.

Hakan Calhanoglu sealed the win for Inter in the 77th minute from the penalty spot, sending

Lazio keeper Christos Mandas the wrong way after Samuel Gigot fouled a charging Joaquin Correa.

Inter will face AC Milan in a two-legged clash in the semi-finals in April.

The two teams have faced each other three times this season already, with Milan winning twice, including in the Italian Super Cup final in early January, and one match ending in a draw.

"Last season we beat Milan many times, we will be ready and we will think about it when the match arrives," Inter midfielder Piotr Zielinski said.



Afghanistan players celebrate after the match

Afghanistan knock England out of Champions Trophy

Lahore, Pakistan - England were knocked out of the Champions Trophy after they suffered an eight-run defeat against tournament debutants Afghanistan in a Group B match on Wednesday.

Opener Ibrahim Zadran smashed 177 off 146 balls, the highest score in the tournament's history, to help Afghanistan overcome Jofra Archer's three early wickets and rack up 325-7. Joe Root's 120 kept England alive in the chase until the 46th over but Afghanistan chipped away with regular wickets eventually bowling them out for 317 with one ball left in the innings.

Azmatullah Omarzai was the pick of the Afghanistan bowlers claiming 5-58.

Klaasen fit again
South Africa batsman Heinrich

Klaasen has recovered from an elbow injury that kept him out of their Champions Trophy opener against Afghanistan, skipper Temba Bavuma said.

The Proteas were unsure if Klaasen would have been available to face Australia in their second match in Rawalpindi on Tuesday but the game was abandoned without a ball being bowled due to rain.

"Everyone is good. Klaasen has recovered from the fitness (issue). That adds a lot of value and the team spirit is good," Bavuma told reporters.

Klaasen could feature in South Africa's final Group B game against England in Karachi on Saturday.

Bavuma said his team will rest for a couple of days before turning their attention to England, who lost to Afghanistan on Wednesday.



Matthew Kuhnemann

Australia spinner Kuhnemann cleared of illegal bowling action

Dubai, UAE - Australia spin bowler Matthew Kuhnemann has been cleared to continue bowling in international cricket after his action was deemed to be legal by the sport's global body following an independent assessment.

Kuhnemann was reported by match officials for a suspected illegal bowling action after he took 16 wickets in Australia's 2-0 test series win over Sri Lanka this month and he underwent an assessment at the National Cricket Centre in Brisbane.

A bowler is allowed 15 de-

grees of extension in their elbow before a delivery is considered illegal.

The International Cricket Council added on Wednesday the amount of elbow extension for all of Kuhnemann's deliveries was found to be within the level of tolerance permitted under the ICC Illegal Bowling Regulations.

Kuhnemann's case had generated debate in Australia because of the 28-year-old's previously spotless record in more than 100 professional matches dating back to 2017, including five tests and four one-day internationals.

'BIG NAMES, BIG GAMES'

Ponting backs Kohli to chase Tendulkar's all-time ODI record

Dubai, UAE - Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting reckons Virat Kohli will give himself the "best chance to be remembered as the all-time leading run-scorer" in ODIs.

With his unbeaten 100 against Pakistan in Dubai on Sunday, Kohli moved up to No.5 on the ICC's ODI rankings and became just the third player to breach the 14,000-run barrier in 50-over cricket. Already past Ponting in the highest run-scorers list, he is now 149 away from second-placed Kumar Sangakkara, but still 4341 behind Sachin Tendulkar who sits on top of the pile.

"With someone like Virat, you never write him off, because I'm sure he'd be motivated by that [achieving the record], I think," Ponting said on the ICC Review Podcast. "Now that he's gone past me and only two ahead of him, I'm sure he wants to give himself the best chance to be remembered as the all-time leading run scorer in the game."

game for so long.

"Congratulations to him [Kohli]. He's obviously been a champion player for a long, long time. And particularly, probably in the white-ball formats where he's been an unbelievably good 50-over player," Ponting said. "In fact, I think I'm on record before saying I don't think I've ever seen a better 50-over player than Virat Kohli."

"It's crazy when you think about it, isn't it? Just how good Virat's been over such a long period of time, yet he's still 4,000 runs behind Sachin. I mean, it just goes to show how good Sachin was, but also his longevity in the

I don't think it's going to be long, maybe the next game before he goes past Sangakkara. But still, a little way to go to catch Sachin

RICKY PONTING

game. How long Sachin played for and how long you're able to maintain such high levels for as an individual player? And that's the one thing I've always judged excellence on, is how long you can maintain it for."

Kohli's form has been under scrutiny for a while. He had a lean Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2024-25 in Australia where he averaged 23.75. In the two ODIs against England, he managed 5 and 52. However, Ponting wasn't surprised that Kohli brought his best foot forward against Pakistan. "Look, I've always said big games equal big names. You need your big names to stand up in those big moments."



Virat Kohli

Daniil Medvedev wins Dubai opener

Dubai, UAE - Top-seeded Daniil Medvedev of Russia survived a day of upsets at the Dubai Tennis Championships, moving to the second round after a 6-4, 7-6 (4) win over Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff.

The second and third seeds - Alex de Minaur of Australia and Andrey Rublev of Russia, respectively -- were upset.

Marin Cilic, a 38-year-old Croatian knocked out de Minaur 6-2, 3-6, 6-3, while qualifier Quentin Halys of France eliminated Rublev 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (5). Rublev won last week in Doha.

Also moving to the second round were fifth-seeded Ugo Humbert of France, Tallon Griekspoor of the Netherlands, Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime, Italians Luca Nardi and Matteo



Daniil Medvedev

Berrettini, and Nuno Borges of Portugal. Borges toppled eighth-seeded Arthur Fils of France in straight sets.

Zverev wins in Mexico
Top seed Alexander Zverev, who won this event in 2021, rallied from a first-set loss to down Matteo Arnaldi 6-7 (2), 6-3, 6-4 in the second round in Acapulco, Mexico.

Germany's Zverev, ranked No. 2 in the world, converted 2 of 4 break-point opportunities and saved all three break points to work past Italy's Arnaldi, ranked No. 33, in two hours, 44 minutes.

Denmark's Holger Rune, the fourth seed, eliminated Spain's Roberto Carballes Baena 7-6 (4), 6-3. Ninth-seeded Denis Shapovalov of Canada won in straight

sets over American qualifier Nishesh Basavareddy 7-5, 6-2. Non-seeded winners were Spain's Alejandro Davidovich Fokina, Brandon Nakashima and Mexican wild-card Rodrigo Pacheco Mendez.

Seventh-seeded Frances Tiafoe defeated France's Alexandre Muller 6-4, 6-2 in the late match.

Power outage disrupts matches
Six singles matches were completed in Santiago before play was suspended due to a curfew because of widespread power outages across the country. The curfew, according to media reports, lasted from 10 p.m. local time Tuesday to 6 a.m. Wednesday because of the emergency.

Liverpool's Slot gets two-match suspension after derby chaos

Liverpool, England - Liverpool manager Arne Slot was handed a two-match suspension following the chaotic Merseyside derby with Everton earlier this month, while both clubs have been fined, the Football Association said on Wednesday.

Slot was shown a red card after the final whistle and admitted the charge of acting in an improper manner and using insulting or abusive words or behaviour towards the referee and an assistant referee.

The manager also received a

70,000 pounds (\$88,522.00) fine, while his assistant coach Sipke Hulshoff, also sent off


Arne Slot

after the final whistle, has also received a two-match suspen-

sion and a 7,000 pound fine.

Everton were fined 65,000 pounds and Liverpool 50,000 pounds after both clubs admitted to charges of failing to ensure their players did not behave in an improper or provocative way after the final whistle.

Everton's James Tarkowski equalised late in stoppage time, sparking wild celebrations and Curtis Jones took umbrage at Abdoulaye Doucoure celebrating in front of the visiting fans after a 2-2 draw in the final derby at Goodison Park on February 12.

Antonelli puts Mercedes on top in first F1 test session

Manama, Bahrain - Lewis Hamilton did more than a full race distance on his first day of testing for Ferrari on Wednesday but Italian Andrea Kimi Antonelli, his replacement at Mercedes, topped the opening session timesheets and did the most mileage.

Seven-times Formula One world champion Hamilton completed a solid 70 laps in total and was fifth fastest by lunchtime at Bahrain's Sakhir circuit with the times of little real significance at this stage.

Antonelli, 18, was the first out on track and led at the end of the opening four-hour stint



Andrea Kimi Antonelli

with a quickest lap of one minute 31.428 on medium tyres and 78 laps under his belt without incident.

New Zealander Liam Lawson, four-times world champion Max Verstappen's new Red Bull teammate, spun his new RB21

but was second fastest and 0.132 slower, with Williams' Alex Albon third.

Lawson did 58 laps and Albon 63 on a day that started breezy and chilly at around 14 degrees celsius.

Racing Bulls' Yuki Tsunoda, fourth on the timesheets, matched Antonelli's 78 lap tally, with British rookie Oliver Bearman completing 72 for Haas.

Australian rookie Jack Doohan was testing for Alpine, and ended the session sixth with 68 laps and compatriot Oscar Piastri was eighth for champions McLaren and did 66 laps.



14

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Fair winners share their success stories



15

IN TOWN

Charity Golf Scramble held in support of Positive Vision Association



16

ENTERTAINMENT

A peek into tinsel town, in Hollywood and Bollywood

ESO SUSTAINABILITY FAIR 2025

FUTURE IS GREEN

Twelve schools from Muscat, Suhar, and Sur participated in the ESO Sustainability Fair 2025, highlighting the efforts of young innovators striving to make a lasting environmental impact

Nisha Joshi
Muscat

The lush lawns of the Sheraton Oman Hotel in Muscat were transformed on Tuesday into a hub of creativity and sustainability, as students, businesses, and environmental advocates gathered for the ESO Sustainability Fair 2025. This year marked a new chapter for the event, with the Environment Society of Oman (ESO) taking over as host from the Oman American Business Council (OABC) - a transition that underscores ESO's deep commitment to environmental conservation, education, and community engagement.

From green electricity generation to IoT-assisted agriculture, students showcased impressive, forward-thinking solutions with the potential to make a real impact.

Among the standout innovations was a banana-based eco-friendly hair extension project by students from the International School of Oman, who developed a method to extract and repurpose banana stem fibres into biodegradable hair extensions. Meanwhile, ABA Oman International School focused on mangrove conservation, highlighting their crucial role in coastal protection, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration. The team is working on a Mangrove Monitoring App, using Google Earth to support regeneration efforts and raise awareness about conservation.

A legacy of sustainability

The Sustainability Fair has long served as a platform for young minds to explore and present solutions that address pressing environmental issues. The event was founded by Marla Valdez, who continues to play a pivotal role in its success. Reflecting on this year's edition, she shared, "The young teams have been working on their projects under the guidance of their science teachers or Eco Club facilitators, who have helped streamline their participation. Seeing their passion and dedication gives us confidence in the next generation of sustainability leaders."

This year's fair was made possible through the support of key partners, each playing a significant role in its success.

Bauer Nimr, the event's overall sponsor, has been a dedicated supporter since the fair's inception. The company, known for developing the world's largest commercial constructed wetland in Oman, continues to set a benchmark for large-scale environmental solutions. Five Elements Environmental Services joined as a supporting partner, reinforcing the importance of private sector involvement in environmental initiatives.

The Marriott Business Group reaffirmed its commitment to the event, with Sheraton Oman serving as the host venue this year. This follows last year's successful edition at the W Muscat, which remained actively involved in this year's gathering. Apex Media, the event's official media partner, played a key role in amplifying the fair's impact and reaching a wider audience.

Community of changemakers

Beyond student projects, the fair welcomed a diverse group of sustainability-driven organisations, SMEs, and startups, all working towards a greener Oman. Participants included be'ah, Zalul, Biqool Tech, Move Green, GUTech, WhiteWall Digital Solutions, Global Shapers Muscat, Muscat Cats & Dogs, and Animal Rescue Oman. Each showcased their own contributions to sustainability - whether in waste management, clean technology, digital innovation, or conservation - highlighting how different sectors can work together to drive meaningful environmental change.

ESO Board Member Dr Ali Akaak, who also served as a judge, reflected on the event's significance, "We are honoured by the trust placed in ESO to host this important initiative, which aligns perfectly with our mission of environmental conservation and community engagement. Seeing the collaboration between students, SMEs, and sustainability-focused projects was truly inspiring. This event has great potential for growth, and we look forward to expanding its reach to include more private schools across Oman."

The enthusiasm and dedication displayed throughout the day reaffirmed the importance of fostering sustainability at an early stage. Judges noted the depth of research, creativity, and commitment demonstrated by the students, reinforcing the power of youth-led innovation in shaping a more sustainable future.

As ESO steps into its new role as host, the Sustainability Fair continues to evolve, offering a space where ideas turn into action and where the next generation of environmental leaders takes centre stage. With growing interest and engagement from schools, businesses, and sustainability advocates, the fair's future looks promising, and ESO is committed to expanding its impact in the years to come.

Participating Schools:

ABA Oman International School
ABQ Azzan
ABQ Sohar
AGS Muscat
Cheltenham Muscat
Ellesmere Muscat
Hay Al Sharooq International School, Sur
Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir (Cambridge)
Indian School Al Wadi Al Kabir (CBSE)
International School of Oman
The American International School of Muscat
The Sultan's School

Winners of 2025

Most innovative idea

International School of Oman

Most practical implementation

ABA Oman International School

Best presentation

ABQ Azzan

Overall winner

Hay Al Sharooq International School, Sur

See also [Page 14](#)

go-green



From renewable energy to sustainable living, the ESO Sustainability Fair showcased inspiring ideas and practical initiatives. Here are brief comments from the four winning teams on how they managed to get to the top:

Sustainability starts young



Most innovative idea: International School of Oman
Project name: Agriculture Culture

We are students of the International School of Oman Eco Club: Israa Taherzadeh, Qatar al Nada al Amri, Khawla al Mushaifri and Layan al Mahrouqi, guided by our teacher Katie al Hodali.

Our project transforms agricultural byproducts - banana stems and coconut husks - into biodegradable products like eco-friendly hair extensions, sustainable pots, and candles. This reduces waste, promotes sustainability and empowers local communities, especially women, through job creation and skills development.

Through teamwork, we've realised there are no limits to what we can achieve. By collaborating effectively, we've combined our strengths, fostering creativity and innovation.

Sustainability is not just a choice but a responsibility. By repurposing waste, we can positively impact the environment and empower communities for a better future.



Most practical implementation: ABA Oman International School
Project name: Mangrove Guardians

We are the ECOSOC team from ABA Oman International School, consisting of Sarah Luisa-Emmer (Team leader), Nara Molavi (Research lead), Angela Jabbour (Presentation lead), Dylan Le Ribeus (Model design), Sami al Busaidi (Model construction), Alexandra Serret, and Malaak Mohamed.

Our project focuses on mangroves in Oman, vital for coastal protection and carbon sequestration. Despite their importance, research on mangroves is limited. We aim to address this by developing a Mangrove Monitoring App, conducting field research, supporting regeneration, and raising awareness of their ecological role in protecting Oman's coastline.

We learned the value of collaboration, with each team member contributing their skills - coding, research, and fieldwork. Effective communication and teamwork were essential to our success, and this project has been a whole-school initiative towards sustainability.

We have recognised the importance of conserving Oman's ecosystem, not only for environmental reasons but also for its cultural and historical significance.



Best presentation: ABQ Azzan
Project name: Pioneering a sustainable future through scientific innovation and community engagement

Our team includes Khalid al Aamri and Ahmed al Mahruqi (Leads for Scientific Innovation - Automated Greenhouse), Ahad al Riyami (Lead for Creative Upcycling) and Kiana Ebrahimi and Weaam al Mughairi (Leads for Sustainable Fashion), supported by Aimaan al Saadi, Gustav Tredoux, Yousif Abdoun, Yara al Mandhari, Mariam al Balushi, and Maryam Abdullah.

We focus on sustainability through scientific innovation, upcycling, community engagement, and sustainable fashion. Our project includes an automated greenhouse that optimises plant growth and conserves energy, interactive games made from upcycled materials to reduce screen time, and a Sustainable Fashion Initiative using natural dyes and repurposed fabrics. Our community efforts promote recycling and ecosystem restoration.

Our key message is: "At ABQ, 'We Care'. Small actions in the community can lead to significant global environmental changes. Sustainability thrives on innovation, creativity, and collective responsibility for a greener future."



Overall Winner: Hay Al Sharooq International School, Sur
Project name: Kulna environmental club

As members of Kulna Environmental Club, we are dedicated to sustainability and preserving Oman's natural beauty. Our team focuses on impactful initiatives, including a greenhouse with a hydroponic system, a composting and recycling programme, and various environmental projects.

We work on practical, life-changing actions that encourage a mindset shift, inspiring our community to contribute to a greener Oman.

We believe that Oman's nature and environment are worth every effort and deserve our care and commitment to ensure they remain in the best condition.

Our project emphasises that preserving Oman's natural beauty and biodiversity requires continuous effort. We aim to reduce food waste by transforming it into useful compost, helping to protect our environment. Additionally, we are committed to tackling plastic waste, which poses a severe threat to nature. By taking these steps, we hope to create lasting change and a more sustainable future for Oman.

CLASSIFIEDS

SITUATION WANTED

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

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

FOR RENT

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

WJ Towell Group Company



Quality car rentals at competitive prices.

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

www.orbit-oman.com

أوربت ORBIT
Car Rental & Lease

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

CLASSIFIED LISTINGS

MUSCAT DAILY offers a variety of classified listings for individuals and establishments: Situations Vacant/Wanted, Accommodation Wanted or Available, Sale of Household Items, Cars for Sale or Wanted, Matrimonial Alliances, etc

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



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

عيادة فصول السنة للطب الهندي التقليدي
ALL SEASON AYURVEDA CLINIC

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



take a break

IN TOWN

Ras al Hamra Charity Golf Scramble



Charity Golf Scramble held in support of Positive Vision Association on Feb 21 at Ras al Hamra Golf Club



Photos: V.K. Shalfer

BOGGLER

E	Y	U	I
S	E	D	L
T	F	R	X
F	L	A	I

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

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

TRIVIA QUIZ - FOR TEENS

1. What's the name of the smartwatch launched by Apple in September 2018?
A. Series 4
B. iWrist
C. ZenWatch 3
D. Fenix 2

2. What did the Ugly Duckling eventually turn into?
A. Sea Monster
B. Goldfish
C. Prince
D. Swan

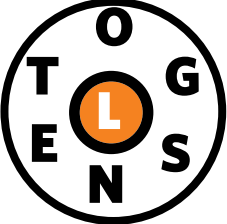
3. What animal is a beautiful songbird from eastern North America?



A Hyena
B Angelfish
C Eastern Bluebird
D Monkeys

Answers
1. A
2. D
3. C

WORD BUILDER



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

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

SUDOKU EASY ANSWER

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

YOUR DAILY HOROSCOPE



ARIES MARCH 21-APRIL 19
You foolishly thought that just this once you could actually be the member of a group, not its leader. Still, you know what needs to be done. When someone comes to you with stacks of folders, trying to get you to please, please help them, you won't refuse. You will put your foot down, though, because you're not going to do this alone.



TAURUS APRIL 20-MAY 20
That secret you've been lugging around? It's obviously at the very forefront of your mind, and you just can't stop yourself from thinking about it. But you'd better make a decision about whether to hang on to it or spill it. Based on the number of times you've come within inches of revealing everything without even meaning to, you may not have a choice much longer.



GEMINI MAY 21-JUNE 21
If there's one thing you absolutely can't stand, it's a deceptive person. You're a big fan of the truth, no matter how much it hurts, because it's at least something you can depend on. So when someone comes to you with what doesn't even sound like a good half-truth, not only will you not be amused, you'll be disgusted, and you won't try to hide that fact. Not one iota.



CANCER JUNE 22-JULY 22
Romance and the unpredictable are on the agenda big time, and you're so game for them. Of course, the romance part isn't any surprise. You've been a fan of that tender subject since you were a kid. But being fond of unpredictability is a different story. That's a taste you've acquired far more recently.



LEO JULY 23-AUGUST 22
You're still mad, and you don't care who knows it. You especially don't care if the person who inspired this anger knows it. After all, don't they deserve to bear its brunt more than anyone? So why dole these feelings out to innocent bystanders little by little? What you really should do is hang on to your annoyance, wait for the individual who deserves it and let 'em have it. It's only fair.



VIRGO AUGUST 23-SEPTEMBER 22
You're worried about money, but you don't need to be. In fact, you might even be pleasantly surprised by a loan that's repaid or a raise that comes your way, something you knew was coming but had forgotten about long ago. That doesn't mean you should get busy spending the money before it arrives, but you might want to think of what you'll do when it does come.



LIBRA SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 22
You're not in the mood for lighthearted chitchat, social niceties, or anything even remotely shallow. You want intensity, depth, and passion in large quantities, and you know right where to find it. Call that friend who never lets you down in this department, and tell them what you're after. Chances are good they're in the same frame of mind.



SCORPIO OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 21
One of the secrets you hide so well is that you love secrets (and intrigue and mysteries), provided, of course, some romance is at the root of it all. Well, lucky you. There's plenty of that on today's agenda, and you'll be privy to everything. Now, what are you going to do when a friend asks you what's on your mind? Grin and don't say a word.



SAGITTARIUS NOVEMBER 22-DECEMBER 21
You're feeling uncharacteristically woozy, dreamy, and nostalgic, and you're not quite sure why. Might be that person you were chatting with recently, in a supposedly "casual" manner. Or perhaps you've been pining over someone for a while who's recently restored contact with you. Either way, once you have the conversation you're dying to have, you'll be able to concentrate on work again.



CAPRICORN DECEMBER 22-JANUARY 19
Here's another day of feeling everything to the nth degree. Does that mean you won't be good company? Quite the contrary. You'll be intriguing, passionate, and downright magnetic. Just be sure you don't spend your time with the faint of heart. That won't do.



AQUARIUS JANUARY 20-FEBRUARY 18
There's no reason to continue letting this thing bother you. You have things to do and people to see and not nearly enough time to squeeze it all in. Let go of your nagging concern. Focus on the pleasant things going on in your world, and let someone else do the worrying. You've done enough of that lately.



PISCES FEBRUARY 19-MARCH 20
You've been looking for someone to have a legitimate conversation with for days. That means no gossip, no stories from the past, and no shallow banter. That might be nice on other days, but right now you're after something more along the lines of the meaning of life, how the universe began and the nature of religion. If you find someone who's game, you might also discover you have a lot more in common than conversation

entertainment

WHATS ON



Genre: Action
Starring: Arjun Sarja,
Yogi Babu, Raashi Khanna,
Jiiva Language: Tamil

AGHATHIYAA

A struggling art director discovers an old camera, unlocking a dangerous mystery from the 1940s, leading him and his fiancée to uncover buried secrets and face a vengeful ghost.

NEW JASON STATHAM MOVIE ‘MUTINY’ SET FOR 2026

A new Jason Statham movie is heading to cinemas in a matter of weeks. A *Working Man* comes to the screen from director David Ayer, is co-written by Ayer and also Sylvester Stallone. Adapted from the book *Logan's Trade*, the film hits cinemas on 28th March. However, today we've heard news that another Statham-led actioner, *Mutiny*, has got a debut date set for next year.

Mutiny is reportedly already in the can with Lindsay Michel and J.P. Davis writing the screenplay and Jean-François Richet (the brilliant *Plane*) directing. Statham is reportedly playing a framed man who is now on the run following the murder of his billionaire boss. As he tries to clear his name, he uncovers an international conspiracy,

so reports the outlet. Shooting on the new Jason Statham movie wrapped recently after taking in locations including the U.K. and Malta. Annabelle Wallis and Jason Wong are in the cast along with the brilliant Roland Møller playing the bad guy. Danish actor Møller is known for his work in the likes of *A Hijacking*, *Atomic Blonde* and *Skyscraper*.



سوق الفواكه

SOUK

الفواكه

AL FAWAKEH

27 Feb to 2 Mar 2025

رمضان مبارك

RAMADAN MUBARAK

RIAL 0.590 Apple Royal Gala (UK) per kg	RIAL 0.190 Orange Valencia (Egypt) per kg	RIAL 0.890 Plums Red (South Africa) per kg	RIAL 0.690 Pears Samper per kg
RIAL 0.290 Banana Robusta Per Kg	RIAL 0.690 Papaya (Salalah) per kg	RIAL 0.650 Apple Red (Iran) Small Per Box	RIAL 0.890 Grapes White Small Per Box
RIAL 0.990 Orange Valencia Per Box	RIAL 0.690 Mangosteen per pack	RIAL 0.650 Plums Punnet Per pack	
RIAL 1.390 Cherry Per Pack	RIAL 2.990 Dates Khalas Per Box (Approx 5kg)	RIAL 0.390 Onion Small Per Bag (Approx 2.5 kg)	RIAL 1.890 Garlic Per Bag

سعادة

HAPPINESS

LOYALTY REWARDED

استمتع بخصومات فورية وفوائد إضافية مع برنامجنا المميز

EARN POINTS - INSTANT DISCOUNTS - MEMBER BENEFITS

Scan to Join Now

Lulu

لولو

حيث يأتي العالم للتسوق

Where the world comes to shop



Chhaava: A bloody tale of history, betrayal, valour

BOLLYWOOD MOVIE REVIEW:

WOLF MAN

Genre: Period, Action, Drama Starring: Vicky Kaushal, Rashmika Mandanna, Akshaye Khanna, Diana Penty Abbott, Julia Garner, Sam Jaeger

Anirban Ray

The film opens with the demise of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, an event that shakes the Maratha Empire to its core. As his successor, Sambhaji wastes no time asserting his strength, leading a bold assault on Burhanpur, one of the Mughals' strongest forts. Enraged by this challenge, Aurangzeb sees it as an opportunity to annihilate the Marathas once and for all. However, Sambhaji's unparalleled battle strategies keep the mighty Mughal empire on edge.

Just when victory seems within reach, betrayal from within changes the course of history. Captured by his enemies, Sambhaji Maharaj faces inhuman torture, refusing to surrender his pride and principles.

Lead actor Vicky Kaushal delivers one of his career's most intense performances, fully embodying the character of Sambhaji Maharaj. His powerful screen presence, fierce dialogue delivery, and emotionally charged moments, especially in the climax, make for a gripping watch.

Akshaye Khanna as Aurangzeb portrays a calm yet menacing emperor, blending cruelty with a composed demeanor. His character could have been given more screen time and depth, but he still leaves an impact. Rashmika Mandanna, though in a limited role as Maharani Yesubai, brings sincerity and grace to her performance.

Meanwhile, Ashutosh Rana, Divya Dutta, and Vineet Kumar Singh shine in their supporting roles.

The film does justice to the guerrilla warfare tactics employed by the Marathas - an aspect often read about but rarely seen in cinematic grandeur. These high-octane battle sequences are among the film's biggest highlights, making it a must-watch on the big screen.

Rating ★★★★★



Changan Oman Introduces a New State-of-the-Art Showroom in Al Qurum and Expands Its Network to 14 Service Centres and 8 Showrooms Across Oman.



UNI SERIES : THE LUXURY RANGE OF CHANGAN

Muscat, Oman – February 26, 2025
Muscat: Changan Oman has reinforced its commitment to the Oman market with the launch of a new state-of-the-art showroom in Al Qurum, bringing customers an enhanced and refined automotive experience. This newly opened showroom reflects Changan Oman's dedication to providing world class facilities, ensuring a premium and welcoming environment for customers to explore its impressive range of vehicles.

As the brand continues to grow, it has also opened new showrooms in Barka, Sur, and Nizwa, ensuring even greater accessibility for customers across the country. With a total of eight showrooms and fourteen service centres, Changan Oman has established one of the most extensive automotive networks in the Sultanate. This expansion reaffirms the brand's focus on providing buying convenience and exceptional after sales support to our Oman customers.

A spokesperson for Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment LLC (AGAE), official distributors of Changan Oman said, "By combining an extensive 8 showroom and 14 service network with an exceptional lineup of vehicles, the brand ensures that customers across Oman enjoy a seamless and superior automotive experience. For those looking to experience the latest in automotive innovation, visiting one of Changan's showrooms is the perfect opportunity to discover a vehicle that perfectly suits their lifestyle."

The Qurum showroom serves as a flagship facility, designed to offer a supreme customer experience, showcasing the latest Changan models in an immersive and sophisticated setting. The addition of a showroom in Barka enhances accessibility for customers in the western region, particularly those in Al Batinah and surrounding areas. Similarly, the showroom in Sur will cater to the needs of customers in the eastern part of

Oman, ensuring that the latest Changan vehicles and services are readily available. In the interior region, the showroom in Nizwa will provide a convenient point of access for customers, making Changan Oman diverse network lineup more accessible to a wider audience.

Beyond these new locations, Changan's existing showrooms in Mawaleh, Sohar, Ibri, and Salalah continue to serve customers across the country. Whether in the capital, the northern or southern regions, or the interior, Changan Oman growing presence guarantees that every customer has access to the brand's cutting-edge vehicles, expert consultations, and test drive opportunities without having to travel far.

To complement its expanding showroom network, Changan Oman has also built a comprehensive after-sales service infrastructure, with fourteen strategically located service centres ensuring that customers

receive top-tier maintenance and repair support. In Muscat, service centres in Wadi Kabir, Mawaleh, Azaiba, Mabella, Rumais, Rusayl, and Amerat provide convenient servicing options for residents of the capital which is one of the largest network in capital and beyond Muscat, Changan has established service centres in Nizwa, Sohar, Barka, Salalah, Sur, Ibri, and Duqm, ensuring that customers across Oman have easy access to expert vehicle servicing, diagnostics, and repairs. Each centre is equipped with advanced tools and staffed by highly trained technicians, guaranteeing efficient and professional support for all Changan models.

Changan Oman's success is driven by its diverse and technologically advanced vehicle lineup, catering to a wide range of customer preferences. The UNI-K 4WD, a refined mid-size SUV and CS95 7 seater SUV offers a powerful 2.0-litre turbocharged engine with 8-Speed Automatic Transmission,

while the UNI-T crossover provides a sleek, futuristic design with a 1.5-litre turbocharged engine for a smooth driving experience. Those seeking economical and compact yet sophisticated sedan can explore the ALSVIN, featuring a 1.5-litre Blue Core engine with 5DCT for efficiency, while the EADO Plus 1.5 Turbo sedan combines stylish aesthetics with advanced technology mated with 7-Speed Dual clutch transmission. The Luxury All-new UNI-V Sedan blends style and performance with a 2.0-litre turbo engine, modern technical and advanced safety features. The HUNTER Pickup is available in double cab gasoline and diesel variants. The CS35 Plus, a compact SUV, delivers a balance of power and comfort with a 1.5-litre turbocharged GDI engine, making it ideal for city driving. Meanwhile, the Luxurious All-new UNI-S ensures a refined and dynamic experience with its 1.5-litre turbo engine and seven-speed dual clutch transmission, and each model embodies Changan's commitment,

and performance, offering something for every driver in Oman.

About AGAE

Arabian Gulf Automobiles and Equipment (AGAE) offers state-of-the-art showrooms located in Al Qurum, Mawaleh, Sohar, Ibri, and Salalah, along with additional new showrooms in Nizwa, Barka and Sur. In addition, AGAE has established fourteen service centres across Oman, including its main service centre in Azaiba, Muscat, providing comprehensive maintenance and repair services. For more information, contact Changan Oman at the toll-free number 80050800, via WhatsApp at 96628909, or visit the newly launched showroom in Al Qurum. Customers can also visit www.changanoman.com to book test drives, request a callback, and explore the latest Changan models and Ramadan Offers.

CHANGAN OMAN NETWORK



AL MAWALEH



SOHAR



BARKA



SUR



SALALAH



IBRI



NIZWA

14 SERVICE CENTERS

- AZAIBA • WADI KABIR • AL MAWALEH
- MABELLA • AL AMERAT • RUSAYL
- RUMAIS • BARKA • SOHAR • NIZWA
- IBRI • SUR • DUQM • SALALAH



CHANGAN : THE PREMIUM RANGE