TIMESOFOMAN.COM | TWITTER.COM/TIMESOFOMAN | INSTAGRAM.COM/TIMESOFOMAN | FACEBOOK.COM/TIMESOFOMAN | YOUTUBE.COM/USER/TIMESOFOMANONLINE | LINKEDIN.COM/COMPANY/TIMES-OF-OMAN

عُمان OMAN

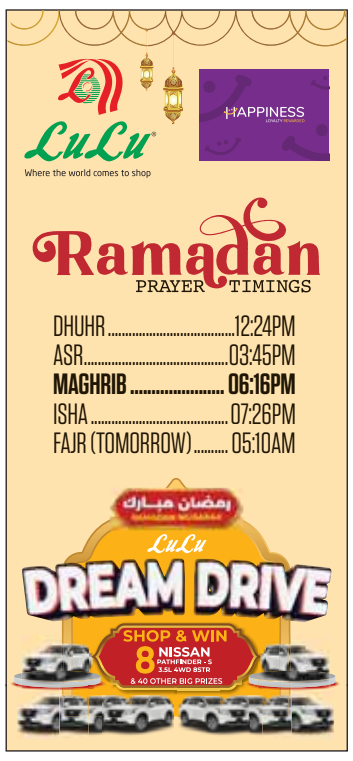
6 085010 120010

# Times OF OMAN

GOLDEN JUBILEE

50 YEARS OF LEGACY

Founded 1975 · Volume 50 No. 008 | 16 Pages · Baisas 200 · Subscription OMR63 | ISO 9001:2008 Certified Company | Chairman/Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali | Printed & Published by Muscat Media Group




RATIFIES AGREEMENT

## His Majesty the Sultan issues four Royal decrees

**MUSCAT:** His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik on Monday issued four Royal Decrees, reading as follows:

Royal Decree No. (23/2025) on ratifying the agreement of cooperation in the field of maritime transport and ports between the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the Kingdom of Morocco, signed in Rabat on 4 July 2023.

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

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

Royal Decree No. (24/2025) on ratifying the agreement between the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the Republic of Cyprus on avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income, signed in Muscat on 8 December 2024.

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

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

Royal Decree No. (25/2025) on ratifying the agreement between the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the United Republic of Tanzania on the Elimination of Double Taxation on Income Taxes and the Prevention of Tax Evasion, signed in Muscat on 15 December 2024.

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

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

Royal Decree No. (26/2025) on ratifying the agreement on air transport between the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the government of the Republic of Djibouti, signed in Muscat on 6 January 2025.

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

Article (2) says that this decree shall be published in the Official Gazette and enforced from its date of issue. – ONA

PHONE CALL

## Sayyid Badr discusses historic ties with US Secretary of State

**MUSCAT:** In a phone call to Marco Rubio, Secretary of State of the United States, Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister discussed deep historic relations and friendship between the two countries and the need to meet joint aspirations for the development of political, economic and cultural relations.

The two ministers stressed the importance of continuing the existing strategic dialogue and following up with the partnership, trade and knowledge exchange programmes for the interest of the people of two countries.

The two sides exchanged views on a number of regional and international issues and expressed joint concerns of the two countries along with their support for the efforts aimed at achieving peace and urged constructive dialogue for solving challenging issues.-ONA

# UNIFIED GOVT PORTAL: A NEW ERA OF DIGITAL TRANSITION IN OMAN

The portal marks a significant leap forward in the country's efforts to improve the efficiency and accessibility of public services

Saeed bin Hamoud Al Maawali

Dr. Ali bin Amer Al Shidhani

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** Oman's digital transformation continues to gather momentum as the unified electronic government portal takes centre-stage, reshaping the way citizens and residents access government services.

Designed to streamline processes and create a seamless user experience, the portal marks a significant leap forward in the country's efforts to improve the efficiency and accessibility of public services.

Eng. Saeed bin Hamoud Al Maawali, Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, and General Supervisor of the National Government Digital Transformation Programme, hailed the initiative as a game-changer in the provision of government services.

### Reshaping services

"The launch of the unified portal is not just about integrating services; it is about reshaping how we deliver these services to ensure they are faster, more accessible, and in line with global digital standards. This move is pivotal in enhancing the efficiency and responsiveness of our government services," Al Maawali said.

The unified portal consolidates a range of services into one platform, reducing the need for users to navigate across multiple ministry websites.

The portal integrates services from key government institutions, including the Royal Oman Police, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Housing, and Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology, with other ministries to follow in the coming phases.

Al Maawali further emphasised that the unified portal was created to align with Oman Vision 2040, aiming to create a more responsive and user-friendly government service ecosystem. >A5

TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN

### Over 56,000 visit historic landmarks

1 The number of visitors to historic landmarks in South Al Batinah increased by 15.8% during 2024 to reach 56,203 visitors compared to 48,493 visitors in 2023. >A2

OMAN

### State Council discusses human trafficking

2 In a meeting, the Legal Committee of the State Council discussed the Draft law on 'Combating Human Trafficking' referred to it by the Council of Ministers. >A5

MARKET

### OPAZ holds meeting under Dr. Al Sunaidy

3 The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ) yesterday held its first meeting for the year 2025, under the chairmanship of Sheikh Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, OPAZ Chairman. >B1

# OMAN

PRAYER TIMINGS

| | |
|---|---|
| Dhuhr | 12:24pm |
| Asr | 3:45pm |
| Maghrib | 6:16pm |
| Isha | 7:26pm |
| Fajr (Tomorrow) | 5:10am |

SACRED PERIOD

## Feel connected in Ramadan with Sufi praise at ROHM

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** March is a special month at the Royal Opera House Muscat. During the sacred period of Ramadan, three concerts have been scheduled to enhance the season of praise and reflection, to be performed in the Royal Opera House of Musical Arts.

### Upcoming performances

The concert series will begin with Sufi and Inshaad Praise with Mahmoud El Touhamy on Thursday, 13 March, with the curtain rising at 9.30pm. Mahmoud El Touhamy will present a collection of his own compositions alongside his ensemble of musicians. On Thursday 20 March at 9.30pm, audiences are welcome to immerse themselves in the gentle beauty of Sufi and Inshaad Praise with Majdi Al Balushi and the Al Maali Group, followed by the Areej Ensemble.

The final concert in the series will take place on Monday 24 March at 9.30pm.

Entitled Sufi and Inshaad Praise with Al Mara'shly Group, the concert will present a collection of poems, dedicated to and celebrating Ramadan.

Audiences are invited to join together at the Royal Opera House of Muscial Arts to experience the rich connection of Sufi and Inshaad with the season.

Enrich your Ramadan with the special feeling of joy and peace which this praiseful music is known to inspire.


inma إنماء

THE FOUR POINT PLAN

1 Nurturing
2 Entrepreneurial Development
3 Legitimizing
4 Funding

**SME Development Fund**

(AIWA) Award for Excellence in SME Development in 2017 & 2018 and best brand for 2019 & Awarded 2019 Entrepreneurship Award 4th Edition – Best Financial Support

| Fund Managed by: National company for Projects & Management LLC | NAV Date | NAV per unit (RO) As per audited financial statement |
|---|---|---|
| SME Development Fund | December 31, 2024 | 11,892 |

We are pleased to inform unit holders that the board of SME Development Fund during the meeting held on February 27, 2025 decided to pay RO 400/- per unit to the unit holders as dividend for 2024. The total dividend payment would be RO 800,000/-

PO BOX 119, PC 103, Fifth Floor, Panorama Mall, Al Ghubrah, Sultanate of Oman
Tel: +968 22344000,
E-mail: info@smefoman.com



ABRAJ
ENERGY SERVICES S.A.O.G

NOTICE AND INVETATION TO ATTEND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & EXTRA ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

The Board of Directors of ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES S.A.O.G (the "Company") has the pleasure to invite the shareholders to attend the Annual General Meeting & Extra Ordinary General Meeting , which will be held on Monday at 05:00 PM on 17/03/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om) and will be held in this location (online). If the quorum requirement for holding the Annual General Meeting is not fulfilled, a second Annual General Meeting & Extra Ordinary General Meeting General Meeting shall be held on Wednesday at 05:00 PM on 19/03/2025, via the electronic platform which can be accessed through the website of Muscat Clearing & Depository Company (www.mcd.om) and will be held in this location (Online to discuss the following agenda:

Annual Ordinary General Meeting Agendas :

1. To consider and approve the Chairman's for the financial year ended on 31st December 2024.
2. To consider and approve the Corporate Governance Report for the financial year ended on 31st December 2024.
3. To consider the Auditor's Report and to approve the Financial Statements (Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Account) of the Company for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
4. To notify the general assembly of the transactions carried out by the Company with related parties during the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
5. To consider and approve the proposed cash dividend to the shareholders, as on the date of the meeting, amounting to 22.47 baisa for each share for the financial year ended 31 December 2024.
6. To consider the amounts allocated and spent for the company's social responsibilities for the year ended on 31/12/2024 (as per the Annexure).
7. To discuss and approve the proposed allocation of RO 150,000 to fulfill the Company's Corporate Social responsibilities for the year ending on 31 December 2025.
8. To ratify the sitting fees paid to the board of directors and its sub-committees during the financial year ended 31 December 2024, and determine the sitting fees for the financial year 2025 as recorded in the annexure.
9. To consider and approve the proposal of distributing the total sum of RO 175,000 as remuneration for the Board of Directors of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2024.
10. To appoint the auditors for the financial year ending 31 December 2025 and approve their fees.
11. To ratify the Board resolution to appoint Mr. Ali Al Lawati and Mr. Azzan Al Abdul latif in the vacant Board seats.

Extra Ordinary General Meeting Agendas:

To approved the amendment to the Articles of Association adding two articles (article 8 & article 9) as shown in the attached.

According to the Company's Articles of Association and the controls for holding General Meetings using modern technology issued by the capital market authority , 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 MCDC.
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 97225700 or email: azzam.alkiyoumi@abrajenergy.com

Chairman
Ayad Al Balushi

Legal Advisor
Al Mamary and Alabri Advocates

External Auditor
L.Lc KPMG


# Over 56,000 visit historic landmarks of South Al Batinah

The statistics by Ministry of Heritage and Tourism indicate that the number of visitors to castles and forts in the Governorate of South Al Batinah peaked during November 2024

**A'RUSTAQ:** The number of visitors to historic landmarks in the Governorate of South Al Batinah increased by 15.8% during 2024 to reach 56,203 visitors compared to 48,493 visitors in 2023.

The statistics, issued by the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, indicate that the number of visitors to castles and forts in the Governorate of South Al Batinah peaked during the month of November 2024 (10,962 visitors), constituting a rise by 19.5%. The month of February 2024 came next with 8,436 visitors, followed by January 2024 with 7,839 visitors.

Statistics also showed that the number of visitors to the village of Wakan, located in Wadi Mustal in the Wilayat of Nakhal, reached 36,759, compared to 35,302 visitors in 2023, an increase of 4.1 percent.

The statistics also indicate that the most active month in terms of visitor traffic in 2024 was February, as the number of visitors to the village in this month reached 6,499, because this is the month when flowers bloom on the village's trees..

Statistics also indicate a growth in the number of tourist facilities in line with the increase in tourism activity in the governorate. Data from the Department of Heritage and Tourism in South Al Batinah Governorate showed that the number of licensed tourist facilities in the governorate reached 162 by the end of 2024, distributed between resorts, hotels, hotel apartments, green lodges, guest houses, heritage lodges, tourist camps and rest houses.

Guest houses were the most numerous tourist facilities, with 95 facilities and 57.5 percent, followed by green lodges with 42 facilities and 25 percent, then 11 hotels, representing 6.2 percent, and the remaining percentages were distributed among other tourist facilities.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism explained that the number of registered archaeological and historical landmarks in the South Al Batinah Governorate reached 495 landmarks at the end of last year, including castles, forts, ancient mosques, walls, houses, old neighbourhoods and towers.

The Director of the Department of Heritage and Tourism in South Al Batinah Governorate, said that the number of historical and archaeological landmarks in the governorate shows that the wilayat of Rustaq has the highest number of historical landmarks in the governorate, with 250 sites, representing 50.5 percent of the total number of landmarks in the governorate, followed by the wilayat of Nakhal with 92 sites, representing 18.5 percent, the wilayat of Al Awabi with 62 sites, representing 12.5 percent, and the wilayat of Wadi Al Ma'awil with 49 sites, representing 9.8 percent.

The rest of the historical landmarks are distributed between the wilayats of Barka with 24 sites and the wilayat of Al Musannah with 16 sites, and both wilayats represented 8.7 percent.

He pointed out that there are many archaeological sites in the governorate distributed across most of the governorate's wilayats, dating back to the oldest pre-Islamic civilizations in the world, most notably the Afi and Maslamat sites in the wilayat of Wadi Al Ma'awil, the Halban and Al Khatm sites in the wilayat of Nakhal, and the "Al Awabi" site in the wilayat of Al Awabi.

As for the type of landmarks and the most widespread in the wilayats of South Al Batinah Governorate, the Director of the Department of Heritage and Tourism in South Al Batinah Governorate explained that they are represented by the presence of houses and neighbourhoods in 163 sites, representing 32.9 percent, followed by historical towers with 152 towers, representing 30.7 percent, followed by 96 mosques, representing 19.3 percent, then 58 castles and forts, representing 11.7 percent distributed across the various wilayats of the governorate. Historical walls are the least widespread historical landmarks in the governorate, with 26 historical walls.

The number of historical landmarks that were restored in South Al Batinah Governorate until the end of last year amounted to 47 sites, including two castles, 7 forts, 11 historical towers, 25 historical mosques, one house, and one historical wall.

Regarding the statistics of investment projects, the Wilayat of South Al Batinah Governorate with the most investment in tourism facilities is the Wilayat of Barka, where the number of tourism facilities reached 123 out of a total of 174 facilities in the governorate, representing 70 percent of the total tourism facilities.

This was followed by the Wilayat of Al Musannah with 24 facilities, representing 14.3 percent, and the Wilayat of Rustaq came third with 18 tourism facilities, representing 10.6 percent.

The remaining facilities were distributed between the Wilayats of Nakhal with 8 tourism facilities and Wadi Al Maawil with one tourism facility.

The historic landmarks currently being operated by private sector companies in the governorate's wilayats are Nakhal Fort in Nakhal, Sur and Al Khamis Tower in Al Musannah, in addition to Beit Al Ghasham, which is being operated as a private museum in Wadi Al Maawil.

The most important tourist experiences provided by South Al Batinah Governorate are sea trips to the islands of Al Suwadi Beach, diving trips to the Dimaniyat Islands, and the experience of paragliding. – ONA

20TH EDITION

# Ahd Foundation provides financial support to Fak-Kurbah initiative

**MUSCAT:** Ahd Foundation has provided financial support to the Fak-Kurbah humanitarian initiative, now distributing aid through its 20th edition in 2025.

Fak-Kurbah initiative, sponsored by the Omani Lawyers Association, contributes to the release of insolvent people in all governorates of the Sultanate of Oman.

The initiative's support, which absolves some insolvents held on civil, commercial, legal, or labour cases, seeks to enhance the values of solidarity and cooperation among members of society.

It activates partnership and augments the standards of social responsibility among institutions.

Fak-Kurbah initiative has been lending support to the needy since 2012. It contributed to the release of more than 7,110 insolvents so far.

Donations can be made to Fak-Kurbah electronically through the initiative's website "www.fak-krba.om" and through the initiative's bank account, in addition to donating through the "Thawani" application. -ONA

BILATERAL RELATIONS

# Sayyid Badr speaks to Malaysian counterpart

**MUSCAT:** Sayyid Badr Hamad Al Busaidi, Foreign Minister and Dato' Seri Utama Haji Mohamad bin Haji Hasan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia underscored the depth of bilateral relations and cooperation between the two countries in various fields.

This took place on Monday during a telephonic call between the two ministers.

The two ministers reviewed regional and international developments. They also exchanged views pertaining to the unification of Arab and Islamic stances to confront existing challenges. -ONA

# Agreement signed for shrimp farming project, fishing port

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Ministry by Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources

**MUSCAT:** The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources on Monday signed a contract worth OMR28 million with Khimji Ramdas Contracting and Archimedes Marine Engineering to implement a multi-purpose fishing port in the Wilayat of Masirah.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Ministry by Dr. Saud Hamoud Al Habsi, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources.

The fishing port development project in the Wilayat of Masirah is envisaged to provide basic services to the fisheries sector.

It will extend support to the tourism and commercial sectors and the Royal Oman Police, besides rendering services to visitors of the port.

Breakwaters extending 4,172 metres will be built along the port, whose basin will be deepened further by 5 metres. The facility will have a 1,100-metre long sandy beach and 13 floating berths.

The Ministry also signed a usufruct contract with National Phoenix Company to establish a project for white-legged shrimp in the Wilayat of Shinas in North Al Batinah Governorate. The project, which will cover an area of 15 hectares, stems from national efforts to enhance food security and diversify sources of income in line with Oman Vision 2040, which seeks to enhance investments in non-oil sectors.

The project is expected to have an annual production of 7,500 tonnes of white leg shrimps, with an investment volume of OMR23.5 million. -ONA

## WORDS OF WISDOM

Patience is a beautiful word, as it represents one of the most important attributes followers of Islam should exhibit. To be patient means trusting in Allah's will; a concept that is a great comfort for the sad, weary, and afraid. Allah is with the patient ones, and for Muslims, practising patience, enables us to fully enjoy and savour the blessing that comes at the end of our waiting.

## FASTING HEALTH TIP

Fasting is not only a physical but also a spiritual exercise that has many lasting benefits. It enables a person to develop sustained consciousness of God, helps one to choose a healthier lifestyle by small but meaningful changes in the dietary habits, and helps to make a person more humble and purposeful in daily life.

## IFTAR DRINK

Kavya Ramasubramanian

### GINGER JAGGERY PUNCH

**INGREDIENTS:**

- Jaggery (powdered jaggery preferred)
- Water
- Dry ginger powder
- Salt
- Lemon
- Cardamom powder

**METHOD:**

- Dissolve two or three heaped tablespoons of jaggery powder in 500 ml of water
- Add a few pinch of dry ginger powder, cardamom powder
- Add a pinch of salt to balance the sweetness
- Add fresh lemon juice (from one or two small sized lemons) for tangy-ness.
- Mix well and place in the refrigerator
- Tastes heavenly when served cold

# SWEETEN YOUR IFTAR WITH THESE FIVE DELECTABLE DELIGHTS

Phirni

Qatayef

Sevaiyan ki Kheer

Sheer Khurma

Shahi Tukda

As the sun sets and the call to Maghrib prayer marks the end of the fast, Iftar becomes a cherished moment of togetherness, gratitude, and indulgence. While savoury dishes take cenre stage, no Iftar spread is complete without a touch of sweetness.

Here are some delightful desserts that add a rich and flavourful finale to your Ramadan feast:

**Shahi Tukda**
A regal treat, Shahi Tukda is a decadent blend of crisp, fried bread soaked in saffron-infused milk and garnished with almonds and pistachios. This Mughlai delicacy is a melt-in-your-mouth experience, offering layers of sweetness and crunch in every bite.

**Qatayef**
A Ramadan favourite across the Middle East, Qatayef is a delightful stuffed pancake, often filled with sweet cheese or a mixture of nuts, then fried to golden perfection. Drizzled with sugar syrup or honey, this indulgent dessert is a must-try during the holy month.

**Sheer Khurma**
A traditional Eid specialty, Sheer Khurma is a rich and aromatic dessert made with fine vermicelli, milk, dates, chiroli seeds, and an assortment of nuts. Each household has its own cherished recipe, making this dish a true reflection of familial traditions and celebrations.

**Sevaiyan ki Kheer**
Simple yet satisfying, Sevaiyan Ki Kheer is made by slow-cooking vermicelli in milk until it reaches a creamy consistency. Flavored with cardamom and topped with slivers of almonds and pistachios, this comforting dessert is a staple during Ramadan.

**Phirni**
A North Indian classic, Phirni is a rich and velvety rice pudding, delicately flavored with saffron and cardamom. Served chilled in earthen bowls, this dessert not only pleases the palate but also enhances the Iftar experience with its soothing texture and aromatic charm.

## WORLD WILDLIFE DAY MARKED

Oman celebrated World Wildlife Day with a focus on investment in nature for a sustainable future. Oman was represented by the Environment Authority to mark the day, which falls on March 3 every year. — ONA

# State Council discusses draft law on 'Combating Human Trafficking'

The meeting was chaired by Sheikh Sultan bin Mattar Al Azizi, chairman of Legal Committee

**MUSCAT:** During its 11th meeting of the second regular convening of the 8th term held on Monday the Legal Committee of the State Council discussed the Draft law on 'Combating Human Trafficking' referred by the Council of Ministers.

During the meeting, chaired by Sheikh Sultan bin Mattar Al Azizi, chairman of Legal Committee in the presence of the members and a number of employees of the Secretariat General, the committee reviewed the report of Majlis Al Shura on the draft law, which comes within the Sultanate's role in supporting human rights and its principles aimed to boost the values of justice to cover all sectors of Omani society.

The Draft law on Combating Human Trafficking aims to keep abreast of the latest developments in the field and the regional and international experiences in combating such crimes.

— ONA

11TH NATIONAL RESEARCH AWARD

# Winning research project enhances reservoir water quality

*Times News Service*

**MUSCAT:** Among the many various innovative research projects in the 11th National Research Award organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, 'A Robust Decision-Making Framework to Improve Reservoir Water Quality Using Optimised Selective Withdrawal Strategies' by principal investigator Dr. Mohammad Reza Nikoo, Associate Professor at the Department of Civil and Architectural Engineering, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU), was awarded in the Environmental and Biological Resources field in the PhD category.

Dr. Mohammad Nikoo mentioned that in arid locations such as the Sultanate of Oman, improving the quality of water released from reservoirs is a challenge.

This study, focused on Wadi Dayqah Dam, aimed to develop reliable operational guidelines for releasing water that meets downstream quality and quantity requirements.

Dr. Mohammad and his research team aimed to improve reservoir water quality, identify vulnerable outlets and optimal release strategies, and enhance resilience to climate change impacts.

Using a combination of multi-objective optimisation (NSGA-II), the CE-QUAL-W2 model, and Artificial Neural Networks (ANN), the research team simulated and optimised water withdrawal strategies.

A Robust Decision-Making (RDM) framework identified vulnerable outlets and water release ratios under various climate change scenarios.

The findings of the study revealed that activating multiple reservoir outlets reduces pollutant concentration and improves water quality.

Also, water released from low and mid-level outlets is more vulnerable to pollutants compared to surface outlets, and a strategic release of smaller volumes from lower outlets and larger volumes from upper outlets enhances operational stability and robustness.

Through this study, Dr. Mohammad recommended adopting flexible and optimised water release strategies under changing climate conditions to ensure reliable water delivery. The study was published in the Journal of Hydrology in 2024 with an impact factor of 6.4.

The research team consist of Dr. Mohammad Reza Nikoo, Ms. Nafiseh Bahrami, Prof. Kaveh Madani, Dr. Ghazi Al Rawas, Dr. Sadegh Vanda, and Prof. Rouzbeh Nazari.

Regarding his win, Dr. Mohammad Nikoo stated that "winning the National Research Award is a significant honour that highlights the relevance and impact of our research. It inspires me and my team to continue working on innovative solutions that address critical water and environmental management challenges. It is also a recognition of our collective efforts and encourages us to contribute further to science and society."

DIGITAL GOVERNANCE

< FROM A1

# Portal is a milestone in simplifying complex procedures

"Our objective is clear: to provide a digital platform that brings government services to the people efficiently, increasing our global competitiveness in digital services while delivering the best user experience possible," he added.

Dr. Ali bin Amer Al Shidhani, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, spoke about the critical role of the portal in Oman's broader digital strategy.

"Digital transformation is essential for keeping pace with global technological advancements. The unified portal is a milestone in simplifying complex procedures, reducing the need for in-person visits, and instilling greater confidence in our public sector's efficiency," he said.

The portal's first phase includes 91 integrated digital services and is currently available to users across ten government institutions.

"Phase one is just the beginning. As we expand the portal's offerings, more services will be added progressively, ultimately providing a complete range of digital services for citizens and residents alike," added Dr. Al Shidhani.

"We are working to ensure the portal grows and evolves to meet the dynamic needs of our population." Eng. Saeed bin Abdullah Al Mandhari, CEO of Ithkaa Group, which is overseeing the development of the portal, highlighted the project's role in improving user accessibility. "Our vision was to create a single, user-friendly platform that would bring together the disparate government services currently scattered across various portals," he said.

"By consolidating services under one roof, we are eliminating redundancies and providing a streamlined experience that can be accessed from anywhere at any time." One of the portal's key features is its accessibility, including tools for people with disabilities.

"We've ensured that the portal adheres to international accessibility standards, providing equal access to services for all users," Al Mandhari explained.

"The focus is on inclusivity, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their physical abilities, can easily navigate and benefit from the digital services offered."

Eng. Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Kharousi, Director General of Digital Transformation at the Ministry, underscored the portal's technological advantages.

"The unified portal is powered by a robust infrastructure that ensures high performance and quick response times," he said.

"We've incorporated advanced features, such as real-time predictive data and easy service evaluation tools, to ensure that government agencies can continuously improve service delivery based on user feedback and data-driven insights."

The portal also boasts a set of digital tools to help government institutions expedite the development of priority services.

"The platform's ability to integrate with existing systems and adapt to new technological advancements allows for rapid service updates and enhancements," Al Kharousi noted.

With the unified government portal, Oman is taking bold strides toward enhancing its digital infrastructure, simplifying the way public services are delivered, and meeting the expectations of a digital-first generation.

As more services are integrated and the portal evolves, it is set to become a cornerstone of the Sultanate's vision for the future, further solidifying Oman's position as a regional leader in digital governance.— (With inputs from ONA)

AL BURAIMI GOVERNORATE

# Six investment opportunities offered in farm sector

**AL BURAIMI:** As part of its efforts for boosting investment in the agricultural sector, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in cooperation with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning has announced six new investment opportunities in Al Buraimi Governorate. The six investment opportunities are posted through "Tatweer Platform." The investment opportunities aimed to attract investors and to encourage the SMEs to benefit from the available agricultural resources using the state of the art technologies.

The investment opportunities cover a total area of 29,6 acres including a main investment opportunity at Al Zaroub area in the Wilayat of Mahda on an area of 4,6 acres for growing green vegetables using the modern technologies which boosts agricultural productivity at the area.

Five investment opportunities are allocated for SMEs at Safwan area in the Wilayat of Mahda at five acres for each investment opportunity allocated for growing vegetables, ginger, onion, potatoes and seasonal fodder.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources reaffirmed that applying for these investment opportunities shall be through "Tatweer Platform" which provides a smooth mechanism for submission of applications and encourages the investors involve in the agricultural sector.

This initiative comes within the government efforts aimed to boost the food security, support SMEs and improve the agricultural productivity in the Sultanate of Oman.

Nasser bin Ali Al Marshoudi, Director General of the Directorate General of Agriculture and Water Resources in Al Buraimi Governorate said that over 20 investment opportunities in the agricultural field would be announced during this week. These opportunities shall be in the three wilayats of the Governorate of Al Burami in the fields of agriculture and livestock.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources in cooperation with the Directorate General of Housing and Urban Planning targets announcement of 50 investment opportunities in 2025, he added. - ONA

**INDIAN SCHOOL AL SEEB**

POST BOX NO.2445, PC.111, SEEB CPO, SULTANATE OF OMAN.
Tel:.24451424/474. Fax No.24451353. www.indianschoolseeb.com

**TENDER ANNOUNCEMENT**

| Tender No | Tender Descriptions | Tender Fee (RO) (Non-Refundable) | Tender Documents Available from | Last date of Tender Submission |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ISAS/Tend/ 055/2025 | General Insurance Policies of the School | 10/- | 04-03-2025 | 13-03-2025 |
| ISAS/Tend/ 056/2025 | School Canteen Services for the academic year 2025-26 | 10/- | 04-03-2025 | 13-03-2025 |
| ISAS/Tend/ 057/2025 | Supply of Annual Stationeries | 10/- | 04-03-2025 | 13-03-2025 |
| ISAS/Tend/ 058/2025 | Supply of School Laboratory Materials | 10/- | 04-03-2025 | 13-03-2025 |

The above tenders are to be addressed to
**The Chairperson, Purchase Sub Committee, Indian School Al Seeb,**
must be submitted in a plain sealed envelope, indicating the tender reference without showing any identity of the company.
Tenders may be dropped into the School Tender Box at the School's office.

The school reserves the right to reject any Tender without providing any reason and is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender.

# WORLD

# UN rights chief voices serious concern at new US political direction

Türk's remarks come as second-time US President Donald Trump has signed scores of executive orders touching on issues such as civil rights, as well as foreign policy

**NEW YORK:** Basic human rights in the US are under threat as the country's new administration rolls back previous policies to combat discrimination, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said on Monday.

Türk's remarks to the United Nations Human Rights Council come as second-time US President Donald Trump has signed scores of executive orders touching on issues such as civil rights, as well as foreign policy.

Trump disengaged from the Human Rights Council in February as he moves to reduce the US' involvement in bodies seeking to promote international cooperation.

"We have enjoyed bipartisan support from the United States of America on human rights over many decades," Türk said.

"I am now deeply worried by the fundamental shift in direction that is taking place domestically and internationally," he went on, adding that "policies intended to protect people from discrimination are now labelled as discriminatory."

Türk said progress on gender equality in the US was being reversed, while independent media and institutions were endangered amid "disinformation, intimidation and threats, notably against journalists and public officials."

He also noted that "divisive rhetoric is being used to distort, deceive and polarise," which was "generating fear and anxiety among many."

### Growing power of tech oligarchs

Türk's remarks also seemed to target the world's richest man, Elon Musk, who has been tasked with cutting government administrative costs as head of the so-called Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

Without mentioning Musk by name, Türk spoke of the growing power now held by "a handful of unelected tech oligarchs" who "know where we live, what we do, our genes and our health conditions, our thoughts, our habits, our desires and our fears."

"They know us better than we know ourselves. And they know how to manipulate us," Türk said in comments that were not limited to the situation in the US.

Under Musk, thousands of people have been fired from their positions in various government agencies and departments, including those responsible for international development aid and climate data collection. — DW

Times OF OMAN

Printed and published by: Muscat Media Group
Post Box: 770,
Postal Code: 112

Founder: Essa bin Mohammed Al Zedjali
Chairman / Editor-in-Chief: Mohamed Issa Al Zadjali
Deputy Editor-in-Chief: Anees bin Essa Al Zedjali
Chief Executive Officer: Ahmed Essa Al Zedjali

**EDITORIAL:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24813153, E-mail: editor@timesofoman.com
**ADVERTISING:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24812624, E-mail: advertising@timesofoman.com
**CIRCULATION:** Telephone: 24726666, Fax: 24818270, E-mail: circulation@timesofoman.com

ON FEBRUARY 15

## Woman from India, on death row for killing a child, executed in UAE

**NEW DELHI:** In a heartbreaking turn of events, the Additional Solicitor General (ASG), appearing for the Centre, informed the court that Shahzadi Khan, the woman from Uttar Pradesh, had been executed on February 15.

The ASG also stated that the authorities are extending all possible assistance to her family and her cremation is scheduled for March 5.

The father's plea for MEA intervention for his daughter on UAE death row ended in tragedy, and as a result, the court has disposed of the plea.

Representing the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Chetan Sharma and Advocate Ashish Dikshit informed the Delhi High Court that the Embassy of India in UAE received an official communication on February 28, 2025, from the UAE government. The communication stated that Shehzadi's death sentence was executed on February 15, 2025, in accordance with UAE laws and regulations.

On the same day, the Embassy informed Shabbir Khan, the father of Shehzadi, about the confirmation of her execution. He was also informed that the family could come to the UAE by March 5, 2025, to participate in her last rites. Additionally, a dedicated mobile number for contacting the Indian Embassy was provided to Khan, stated MEA.

The father of Shahzadi Khan, the UP woman facing a death sentence in the UAE, has approached the Delhi High Court seeking a directive to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and appropriate authorities to issue a bulletin and ascertain information regarding the exact current legal status and well-being of his daughter.

Shahzadi Khan, a 33-year-old woman from Banda district in Uttar Pradesh, was facing execution in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Shahzadi Khan, who was imprisoned in Abu Dhabi's Al Wathba jail, was sentenced to death by a court for the death of a child who was under her care.

Plea moved through advocate Ali Md Maaz stated that in December 2021, Shabbir Khan's daughter obtained a visa and traveled to Abu Dhabi, with a transit in Dubai. In August 2022, her employer gave birth to a son for whom Shabbir's daughter was employed as a caregiver. — ANI

UNITED STATES

## Wildfires in Carolinas prompt evacuations

**WASHINGTON:** The governor of South Carolina in the United States has declared a state of emergency, while firefighters were battling 175 wildfires that erupted across South and North Carolina overnight amid windy and dry conditions, threatening homes and prompting evacuations.

There are ongoing response operations to the sprawling wildfires that had burned a combined 4,200 acres across the state, including blazes burning in Horry, Spartanburg, Oconee, Union and Pickens counties, the South Carolina State Fire Marshal said.

The quick-spreading fire had burned more than 1,600 acres by the end of the day and was threatening the communities of Walkers Woods and Avalon. The fires are due to a summer heat wave and drought affecting the southern part of South America due to the El Nino weather phenomenon, amid warnings from scientists that global warming increases the risk of natural disasters such as extreme heat and fires. — ONA

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

# Mystery disease kills at least 60 in DRC

**KINSHASA:** Another mystery disease outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo has emerged, resulting in at least 60 deaths, health officials say.

It follows a similar event in September 2024, referred to as "Disease X" before the World Health Organization (WHO) identified it as a cocktail of several known acute respiratory illnesses complicated by malaria and malnutrition.

These new outbreaks could have similar origins, but it will likely take time to determine exactly what the cause is.

Toxic contamination is also considered a possible cause.

More than 1,000 cases have been reported across the DR Congo's Equateur province and 141 cases of a disease have been reported in Basankusu's health zone. A separate outbreak in early February consisted of 158 cases and 58 deaths.

In January, Bolamba village reported 12 cases and eight deaths.

Health authorities in the DR Congo and WHO experts are carrying out investigations to determine the cause of the illness and deaths.

Early lab tests ruled out Ebola and Marburg disease. Half of those tested have tested positive for malaria.

"We're not really satisfied with the sampling, so we've sent two WHO epidemiologists up there," Margaret Harris, a WHO spokesperson, told DW News.

"They're up there now and they're overseeing the sampling and getting them back to the laboratories in [DR Congo's capital] Kinshasa."

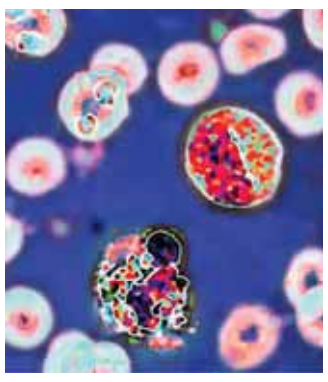
Further testing is being undertaken for meningitis and potential toxic contamination.

WHO emergencies director Mike Ryan, along with local health authorities, favor the latter as a cause.

"It would appear that we have some kind of poisoning event," Ryan told reporters.

The cause of the disease — and whether the illnesses in different regions are connected — remains unknown.

Early reports suggested the first cases were among a group of children who may have eaten a bat, though this incident is not yet confirmed as the cause of the outbreak.



Bats are known reservoirs of viruses and other disease-causing pathogens. Global health advice recommends people steer clear of exposure to dead animals.

Although the main outbreak villages of Basankusu and Bolomba are 116 miles (186 kilometers) apart, it's unclear if the disease outbreaks share the same cause.

### What are the symptoms of the mystery disease?

The WHO's latest memo says symptoms are broad, and include fever, headaches, chills, sweating, stiffness in the neck, muscular aches, joint and body pain, coughing, vomiting and diarrhea.

The broadness of these symptoms and their potential to apply to many diseases makes it impossible to pinpoint the cause without analysis of biological samples from patients.

Some health experts believe the mystery disease is likely caused by several known pathogens acting together.

That malaria has been found in one in two cases already is important information for health authorities, but the addition of further sampling and analysis by WHO officials in conjunction with local teams will help narrow the search for a cause.

"Tests are never 100% accurate, and it is likely that with increased testing, we will have a confirmed pathogen in some of those samples," said Michael Head, an epidemiologist at the University of Southampton, UK.

Health infrastructure in this region of the DR Congo is limited, and there are concerns that the disease could spread. As with the malaria-respiratory infections that caused the 2024 outbreak, malnutrition and other underlying conditions can increase the chances of death. — DW

# Israel widely condemned for blocking aid to Gaza

Hamas said that blocking aid to Gaza's 2 million residents was "cheap blackmail and a war crime" and urged mediators and the international community to press Israel to reverse the decision

**GAZA:** Israel's decision to block humanitarian aid to Gaza since early on Sunday has sparked fierce condemnation from Palestinian factions, regional countries, and international organisations.

At the start of a cabinet meeting on Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the decision "to prevent any entry of goods and supplies into Gaza" was made to pressure Hamas into accepting a new proposal to extend the first phase of the ceasefire and hostage release deal, which he said was put forth by U.S. Mideast envoy Steve Witkoff.

He warned that Hamas would face "additional consequences" if it did not agree to the proposal.

In response, Hamas condemned the decision, calling it in a statement a "blatant attempt to renege on the agreement and evade negotiations for its second phase." The group said blocking aid to Gaza's 2 million residents was "cheap blackmail and a war crime" and urged mediators and the international community to press Israel to reverse the decision. Mahmoud Meedawi, a senior Hamas official, said in a press statement that the group refused to extend the first phase of the agreement with Israel, stressing the need to implement all its phases as originally signed.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine called the decision "a flagrant violation of the ceasefire" and an indication that Israel seeks to evade the second phase of the agreement.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine also condemned the decision, calling it an escalation of Israel's "starvation warfare" against Gaza's population, which will only deepen the already dire humanitarian crisis in the enclave.

Faisal Aranki, a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization's Executive Committee, told Xinhua that Israel's decision will worsen Gaza's already severe shortages of essential goods and medical supplies.

"The Israeli government bears full responsibility for the deteriorating humanitarian conditions due to its violations of the ceasefire agreement and its obstruction of aid deliveries," Aranki said, urging international pressure on Israel to reopen border crossings.

In a press statement, the Palestinian Foreign Ministry warned of the decision's catastrophic consequences, particularly during the holy month of Ramadan.

"We strongly reject the politicization of humanitarian aid and its use as a tool for extortion," it said, calling on the international community to hold Israel accountable and ensure the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty said Sunday that using aid as a weapon of collective punishment and starvation in Gaza is unacceptable and impermissible, affirming that this act represents a blatant and explicit violation of international humanitarian law.

At a joint press conference in Cairo with European Commissioner for the Mediterranean Dubravka Suica, Abdelatty reaffirmed the importance of fully and faithfully implementing the ongoing ceasefire agreement between Hamas and Israel in Gaza.

Israel's decision constitutes a flagrant breach of the ceasefire agreement and a blatant violation of international law, and poses a serious threat of renewed escalation in the region, Jordan's Foreign Ministry said Sunday in a statement.

The ministry emphasised the urgent need for Israel to cease using starvation as a weapon against Palestinians and innocent civilians by imposing a blockade, especially during the holy month of Ramadan.

It also called on the international community to compel Israel to abide by the ceasefire agreement, ensure the implementation of all its phases, and reopen the crossings designated for delivering humanitarian aid to all areas of Gaza. According to a UN statement posted Sunday on social media platform X, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for "humanitarian aid to flow back into Gaza immediately and for the release of all hostages," and urged "all parties to make every effort to prevent a return to hostilities in Gaza." — Xinhua

Full story @ timesofoman.com/world

UTTARAKHAND

# Indian Army concludes rescue operations in Chamoli avalanche

**CHAMOLI:** The Indian Army concluded the search and rescue operations at the Mana area of Chamoli district in Uttarakhand on Sunday. These operations were part of the relief efforts to rescue the trapped Border Roads Organisation (BRO) workers after the avalanche on February 28.

According to the Indian Army, 46 out of the 54 BRO workers were rescued and are undergoing treatment, while 8 people lost their lives in the avalanche.

"Search and rescue operations at the Mana Avalanche site concluded today with 46 workers being rescued successfully, who are currently being given necessary medical treatment. However, despite relentless efforts, day and night, through inclement conditions by the search and rescue parties, 8 lives could not be saved," posted the Army on X.

"The Indian Army extends heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families of those who lost their lives in this tragedy. We also salute the indomitable courage of all personnel of the Border Roads Organisation, who are our partners in developing remote areas of our country," read the post by the Army on X.

Meanwhile, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Sunday offered his condolences to the bereaved families of the deceased BRO workers who lost their lives in the avalanche.

The Chief Minister also prayed for the swift recovery of the BRO workers injured in the avalanche.

Speaking to ANI, CM Dhami said, "The rescue operation was going on continuously for the last two days, and the entire rescue is almost complete. The 46 people who were found in it have all been shifted from Badrinath to Joshimath, and some from Joshimath to AIIMS Rishikesh."

"May all of them recover soon and get completely cured, and some people are no longer among us. We pray to God to give peace to their souls and give strength to their family members to bear the loss," said CM Dhami.

Chamoli District Magistrate Sandeep Tiwari also spoke to ANI about the development in the avalanche incident and said, "The operation was completed at 5:30 pm today, and out of the 54 Border Roads Organisation workers who were trapped there, 46 have been rescued safely, and there have been 8 casualties."

"The district administration got full support from the central government and the state government, due to which this operation was successful. The bodies will be handed over to their families after completing the legal formalities," he said.

The body of the eighth worker missing in the Mana (Chamoli) avalanche incident was recovered by the Army on Sunday afternoon during the ongoing search operation, officials said.

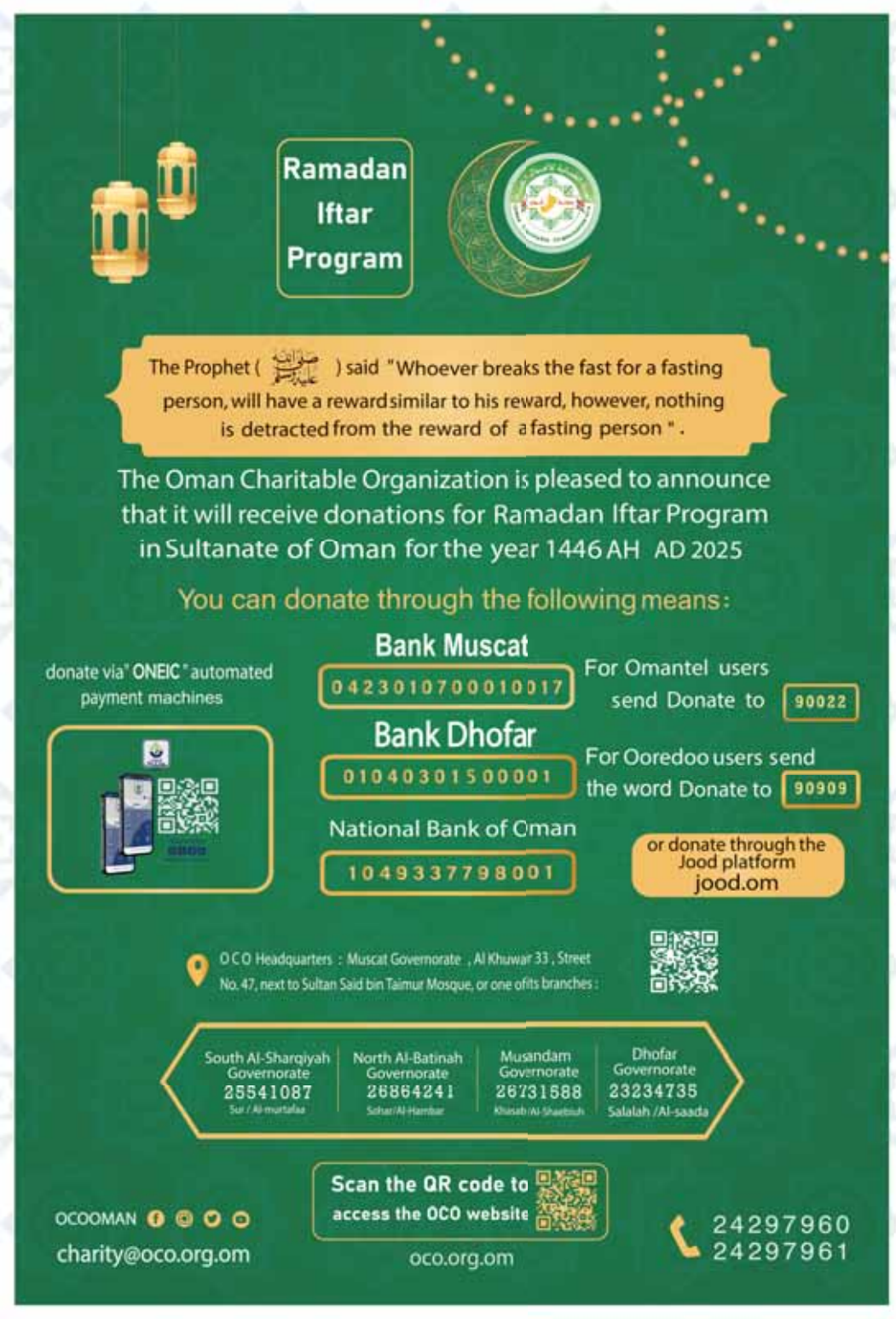
Earlier in the day, three more bodies were found as rescue teams continued searching for the last missing worker.

"All 54 persons have now been rescued or recovered. This marks the culmination of the Mana Village Rescue Operation," said Lt Col Manish Shrivastava, PRO (Defence), Dehradun.

According to officials, the search operation resumed on Sunday morning to locate four missing workers believed to be trapped under the snow after an avalanche hit a Border Roads Organisation (BRO) project site in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district on February 28.

With this, the death toll had risen to eight. Four workers had died on Saturday.

The bodies of the BRO workers retrieved from the avalanche site were airlifted on Sunday and brought to the Joshimath military hospital, officials said. — ANI



SPORTS

# Rohit: Semi-final pressure on both the teams in Dubai

The Indian skipper said Dubai is not 'our home' ahead of their Champions Trophy last four clash on Tuesday against formidable opponents Australia

**DUBAI:** As India prepares for their semi-final clash against Australia in the 2025 Champions Trophy in Dubai on Tuesday, captain Rohit Sharma opened up about the immense pressure both teams will face. The match begins at 1pm, Oman time.

With a place in the final up for grabs, the weight of expectation is heavy, and Rohit acknowledged the high-stress nature of a knockout match.

"There's always pressure in a semi-final, no matter who you're playing against," Rohit said, aware of the challenges that come with such a crucial encounter.

"Both teams will feel it, and there will be some nervy moments in the middle.

"We know Australia is a great team, and they will fight hard. We're talking about a semi-final, and that brings its own level of pressure. Every ball counts, and both teams will be feeling the heat."

Rohit's words reflect the intense atmosphere that surrounds a semi-final, where the stakes are at their highest, and every player knows what's on the line. "It's not just about playing well; it's about handling that pressure and delivering when it matters most," he added.

India, who have been playing all their matches in Dubai, are not taking their location for granted. While some have speculated that playing on familiar ground might give India an advantage, Rohit made it clear that the pressure remains the same, regardless of the venue. "It's not like we know what's going to happen on these pitches," he explained.

"Dubai is not our home. We don't play here regularly, and we don't know what to expect. We will have to adapt to whatever conditions we face in the semi-final."

With Australia's history of strong performances in knockout matches, Rohit knows India will have to bring their A-game. "Australia has been a dominant team for years, and we know they will come hard at us," he said.

"We expect a tough battle, but we also understand that the pressure will be on both sides. It's a semi-final, and that brings its own set of challenges."

The match promises to be an intense one, with both teams feeling the weight of expectation as they fight for a spot in the final.

"At the end of the day, it's all about handling that pressure and staying calm when it counts," Rohit concluded.

### Varun spins magic

Earlier on Sunday, Varun Chakravarthy's mystery spin was the talking point.

The 33-year-old, playing only his second ODI, spun a web around New Zealand with a stunning five-wicket haul (5 for 42) , proving that India's late call to include him in the Champions Trophy squad was anything but an afterthought.

India cruised to a 44-run win in their concluding Group A fixture to top the group as they defended a below-par total of 249. Batting first, India were restricted to 249/9 but led by Varun, they fought back to bowl out the Kiwis for 205 in 43.5 overs.

On a sluggish Dubai track, Varun's spell dismantled New Zealand's middle order, turning a tense chase into a procession.

His ability to mix wrong'uns, skidders, and cross-seam variations left seasoned batters like Glenn Phillips (12) and Mitchell Santner (28) clueless.

Even Kane Williamson, who stood tall with 81, admitted that picking Varun wasn't easy.

"He's tricky. We've seen his variations before, but on a surface like this, it's even tougher. Credit to him for the way he bowled," Williamson said after the match.

For Varun, though, the craft remains as much about deception as it is about execution. Asked to explain his variations, he played it down with a wry smile:

"Sir, basically the ball goes inside, outside, and goes straight. You can keep it that way, but there are minute changes that you can do with that also."

### A game-changer for India

India's bowling attack has been built around pace and classical spin for years.

But Varun's inclusion brings an X-factor - his unpredictability. Rohit, who has faced him in the nets, admitted that even Indian players struggle to read him.

"He doesn't bowl too many variations to us in the nets. Maybe he doesn't want to show them to us either. But that is a good thing. He has got certain weapons which he wants to just put out there when it actually matters," Rohit said.

The timing of Varun's emergence couldn't be better. With India set to face Australia in the semi-final on the same Dubai pitch on Tuesday, his presence adds an element of surprise to India's attack.

Rohit hinted that Varun could play a big role going forward.

"It was a great spell. To come in and deliver under pressure like that in only his second game shows his character. We'll see how the pitch plays, but he's certainly given us a lot to think about."

### The spell

New Zealand seemed in control at 102 for 3, with Williamson anchoring the chase. But once Ravindra Jadeja got Tom Latham, Varun took over.

He deceived Phillips with a wrong'un, trapped Bracewell with a skiddy delivery, and cleaned up Santner with one that held its line.

His final scalp, Matt Henry, came off a cross-seam ball clocked at 113 kmph - just another reminder that Varun's variations go beyond traditional spin.

New Zealand were bundled out for 205, falling 44 runs short of India's 249 for 9.

But for those watching, the bigger takeaway wasn't just India's win - it was the arrival of a mystery spinner who could shape the rest of the tournament.

New Zealand, meanwhile, will travel to Lahore to meet South Africa in the second semi-final on Wednesday.

**Brief scores:** India 249 for 9 (Shreyas Iyer 79, Axar Patel 42; Matt Henry 5-42) beat New Zealand 205 (Williamson 81, Varun 5-42) by 44 runs. - Agencies

VAT# is On Us

Service** Up to 100,000 Kms

Insurance & Registration@

Win EV6## Electric Vehicle

- Sonet 1.5 L 114 HP 5-seater SUV
- Rear View Camera Remote Engine Start & more...

This Ramadan, Kia offers a bouquet of benefits to own a Kia Sonet 1.5L and enjoy amazing rewards & gifts when you own a Kia Sonet. Visit Kia showrooms to know more.
Scheme Period: 23rd February 2025 to 23rd April 2025

Reliable International Automotive LLC. C.R. No. 1707183, Wattayah: 24579846/47: Al Mawelah: 93204360: Barka: 93201347: Nizwa: 99874368: Sohar: 92837722: Sur: 25546190/93204360: Rustaq: 92869449: Salalah: 23211460/99884217. Saturday Showroom Timing: Muscat, Al Mawelah, Barka, Sohar & Salalah from 9.00 AM to 1.00 PM

# VAT will be adjusted in the deal through a VAT Gift, equivalent to 5% of the vehicle price. This VAT gift is in addition to normal Cash Gift offer applicable on the Sonet model. ## Winnings are through Raffle coupons only. Raffle coupons to customers will beprovided only after the finalization & approval of their standard deal by their FC companies/Banks. 1 EV6 Earth (24MY). Raffle Date : 07/05/25 at the end of campaign. Subject to full payment of purchased car. The handover of the Raffle prize will be done after 15th May 2025 upon completion of all legal & financial documents towards purchase of new vehicle such as formal delivery note & Invoice and new vehicle ROP Registration. @1 year insurance & 1 year registration (as applicable) would be given on all Sonet model. Additional premium as per insurance norm would have to be paid by the buyer. For models where Insurance is offered as a benefit, additional cash gift can be availed by customer in lieu of Insurance. ** Total applicable Service benefit upto 10 years/100,000Kms whichever is earlier. All the above benefits are not applicable on Ministry, Bulk fleet, Corporate & RAC deals. Vehicles may also include some Dealer Installed Accessories. Pictures & Colors are indicative. For further details, please visit your nearest Kia showroom.

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE

### OMAN CRUDE PRICE FALLS

The price of Oman oil has decreased, with prices for delivery by May 2025 reaching $73.41, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil fell by 50 cents. - ONA

### MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,425.02 points, down by 0.36% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.06% at 404.58 points. Galfar Engineering, up 2.63%, was the top gainer while Financial Corporation, down 8.51%, was the top loser.

# Treasury bills worth OMR46mn issued

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance

**MUSCAT:** The Central Bank of Oman (CBO) raised 46 million by a way of allotting treasury bills on Monday.

The value of the allotted Treasury bills amounted to OMR 4 million, for a maturity period of 28 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 99.705 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 99.705 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 3.84554 per cent and 3.85691 per cent, respectively.

Whereas, the value of the allotted Treasury bills amounted to OMR 3 million, for a maturity period of 91 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 98.970 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 98.970 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.13132 per cent and 4.17431 per cent, respectively.

While, the value of the allotted Treasury bills amounted to OMR 36 million, for a maturity period of 182 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 97.842 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 97.840 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.32713 per cent and 4.42256 per cent, respectively.

On the other hand, the value of the allotted Treasury bills amounted to OMR 3 million, for a maturity period of 364 days. The average accepted price reached OMR 95.917 for every OMR 100, and the minimum accepted price arrived at OMR 95.880 per OMR 100. The average discount rate and the average yield reached 4.09455 per cent and 4.26887 per cent, respectively.

Treasury bills are short-term highly secured financial instruments issued by the Ministry of Finance, and they provide licensed commercial banks the opportunity to invest their surplus funds. The CBO acts as the Issue Manager and provides the added advantage of ready liquidity through discounting and repurchase facilities (Repo).

It may be noted that the interest rate on the Repo operations with CBO is 5.00 per cent while the discount rate on the Treasury Bills Discounting Facility with CBO is 5.50 per cent.

Furthermore, Treasury Bills promote the local money market by creating a benchmark yield curve for short-term interest rates. Additionally, the Government may also resort to this instrument whenever felt necessary for financing its recurrent expenditures. -ONA

STRATEGIC

## Nama Water appoints Issam Al Ismaili as Chief Commercial Officer

**MUSCAT:** Nama Water Services has appointed Engineer Issam Munir Al Ismaili as Chief Commercial Officer. This strategic move aims to bolster the company's commercial performance, expand its reach within an increasingly competitive market, and improve customer experience.

This appointment reflects the company's commitment to recruiting top Omani talents in key operational areas. The company fosters a stimulating, forward-thinking work environment, embodying its slogan "Stepping Ahead". This approach supports the company's continuous innovation, development, and sustainability vision.

With over 18 years of experience, Essam Al Ismaili is a seasoned leader in business strategy, digital transformation, and high-impact initiatives. His career spans diverse sectors and prestigious organizations both within and outside of Oman, including Awasr Company, Onsor Company, Ooredoo Oman, the Digital Cooperation Organization (KSA), and Du (UAE). These roles have honed his strategic planning, market expansion, and customer relationship management skills. His expertise in business and technology positions him to play a key role in Nama Water Services' commercial and technological advancement. He will collaborate with the existing team to drive an ambitious, forward-looking vision focused on innovation and performance enhancement.

Commenting on this appointment, Qais Saud Al Zakwani, CEO of Nama Water Services, said: "The appointment of Issam Al Ismaili as Chief Commercial Officer represents a significant step that reflects the commitment to strengthening the competencies of our commercial team to enhance performance further to achieve the highest levels of customer satisfaction. We are confident that his extensive experience, through leading the commercial team, will contribute to driving the company's growth and help in the continuous development of our services to keep pace with market aspirations by excelling in service delivery and ensuring its continuous improvement, in addition to technological development and anticipating the future in a way that meets the needs of the modern era, within the stimulating work environment that Nama Water Services is characterized by."

Engineer Issam Al Ismaili expressed his gratitude for the confidence shown in him by Nama Water Services management. He emphasized that this trust inspires him to work diligently and contribute to the company's vision of becoming a leader in the water sector.

He added "I look forward, through teamwork, to effectively contribute to the developmental movement that Nama Water Services is witnessing in all its sectors, especially with regard to customer experience, the commercial and technical aspects, in a way that responds to the great aspirations placed on the company, and in line with the vitality of the services it provides, which require continuous development."

FIRST MEETING FOR 2025

## Opaz board approves rental reductions for new industrial projects

**MUSCAT:** The Board of Directors of the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (Opaz) held its first meeting for the year 2025, under the chairmanship of Sheikh Dr. Ali bin Masoud Al Sunaidy, Opaz Chairman.

During the meeting, it was decided to grant additional incentives to investors by reducing rental values for several years for new projects in Ibri Industrial City, Sur Industrial City and Mahas Industrial City. Additionally, a reduction in rental values and exemptions for the first years were approved for new projects in several industrial cities under construction, including Al Mudhaibi Industrial City, Al Suwaiq Industrial City and Madha Industrial City.

The Opaz Board also approved some amendments to the real estate development regulations in the Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) to make them more attractive to real estate developers and owners of residential and commercial units. The move aims to improve and streamline procedures in the real estate development sector in the zones.

Opaz Board was also briefed on the plan to organise the industrial area in Al Wadi Al Kabir, which is under the management of the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn), with the aim of improving infrastructure and updating the regulations and provisions for investment organisation in the area, taking into account the regulations issued by Muscat Municipality.

Further, the Opaz Board was updated on the executive status of the restructuring of Oman Investment and Development Holding Company and its subsidiary and affiliate companies, in coordination with Oman Investment Authority.

It also provided its comments on several projects and the executive status of these projects as part of the ongoing efforts by Opaz to enhance economic development in special economic zones, free zones and industrial cities. - ONA

# MARKET

# MSX index ends lower

Galfar Engineering, up 2.63%, was the top gainer while Financial Corporation, down 8.51%, was the top loser

**MUSCAT:** The MSX index closed at 4,425.02 points, down by 0.36% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended down by 0.06% at 404.58 points. Galfar Engineering, up 2.63%, was the top gainer while Financial Corporation, down 8.51%, was the top loser. Shares of OQBI were the most active in terms of number of shares traded while OQEP were the most active in terms of turnover.

A total number of 882 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 5.24 million, with more than 30.77 million shares changing hands. Out of 46 traded securities, 14 advanced, 16 declined, and 16 remained unchanged. At the session close, GCC & Arab investors were net buyers for RO 1391K while domestic investors were net sellers for RO 1079K, followed by foreign investors for RO 312K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,739.53 points, down 0.14%. Prices of Oman & Emirates Investment, Al Sharqia Investment, Global Financial Investments, Ominvest were up by 1.49%, 1.33%, 1.14%, 0.30% respectively. Prices of Financial Corporation, Sohar International Bank, Oman United Insurance, Bank Muscat were down by 8.51%, 2.21%, 0.41%, 0.39% respectively.

Industrial Index closed at 5,821.16 points, up 0.47%. Prices of Galfar Engineering, Jazeera Steel Products, Gulf Mushroom Products, Oman Cement were up by 2.63%, 2.56%, 0.84%, 0.20% respectively. Prices of Oman Flour Mills, Al Maha Ceramics were down by 0.92%, 0.79% respectively.

Services Index was down by 0.19% before closing at 1,620.91 points. Prices of Phoenix Power, National Gas, Abraj Energy, Renaissance Services were up by 1.72%, 1.32%, 1.24%, 0.58% respectively. Prices of Muscat Gases, Barka Desalination, Al Suwadi Power, SMN Power Holding, Sembcorp Salalah were down by 5.56%, 2.40%, 1.54%, 1.15%, 1.10% respectively.— **United Securities**

OMAN STOCKS

## MUSCAT STOCK EXCHANGE

**INDICES**

| Index | High | Low | Value | Prev . Value | Diff | Diff % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MSX 30 INDEX | 4,442.26 | 4,422.71 | 4,425.02 | 4,441.01 | -15.99 | -0.36 |
| FINANCIAL INDEX | 7,758.67 | 7,734.90 | 7,739.53 | 7,750.23 | -10.70 | -0.14 |
| Industry Index | 5,821.16 | 5,764.44 | 5,821.16 | 5,793.95 | 27.21 | 0.47 |
| Services Index | 1,634.37 | 1,618.53 | 1,620.91 | 1,623.95 | -3.04 | -0.19 |
| MSX Shariah Index | 405.51 | 401.68 | 404.58 | 404.81 | -0.23 | -0.06 |
| MSX TR INDEX | 6,223.56 | 6,196.17 | 6,199.40 | 6,221.80 | -22.40 | -0.36 |
| FINANCIAL TR IDX | 8,814.65 | 8,787.64 | 8,792.90 | 8,805.06 | -12.16 | -0.14 |
| INDUSTRIAL TR IDX | 6,716.23 | 6,650.80 | 6,716.23 | 6,684.84 | 31.39 | 0.47 |
| SERVICES TR IDX | 1,960.05 | 1,941.05 | 1,943.91 | 1,947.56 | -3.65 | -0.19 |
| FIXED INCOME INDEX | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89 | 1,166.89 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

**Trading Summary**

| Volume | Turnover | Trades | Market Cap | Up | Down | Equal | Sec. Traded |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30,775,623 | 5,241,288 | 882 | 27,259,103,071 | 14 | 16 | 16 | 46 |

## SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR MONDAY, MARCH 3

**REGULAR MARKET**

| ISIN | SECURITY NAME | VOLUME | TURNOVER | TRADES | OPEN PRICE | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE PR. | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF (RO) | DIFF % | LAST PR. | LAST BID | LAST OFFER | PAR VALUE | MARKET CAP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OM0000002176 | JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS | 582,024 | 230,463 | 31 | 0.389 | 0.400 | 0.389 | 0.400 | 0.390 | 0.010 | 2.564 | 0.400 | 0.399 | 0.400 | 0.100 | 49,959,184 |
| OM0000001681 | OMAN EMIRATES HO. | 45,000 | 3,060 | 3 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.068 | 0.067 | 0.001 | 1.493 | 0.068 | 0.062 | 0.068 | 0.100 | 8,287,500 |
| OM0000002440 | AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO. | 20,810 | 1,572 | 3 | 0.076 | 0.076 | 0.075 | 0.076 | 0.075 | 0.001 | 1.333 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.076 | 0.100 | 6,840,000 |
| OM0000008934 | ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES | 773,750 | 188,158 | 50 | 0.243 | 0.245 | 0.242 | 0.245 | 0.242 | 0.003 | 1.240 | 0.245 | 0.244 | 0.245 | 0.100 | 188,699,000 |
| OM0000003125 | GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO. | 91,091 | 8,107 | 10 | 0.089 | 0.089 | 0.089 | 0.089 | 0.088 | 0.001 | 1.136 | 0.089 | 0.087 | 0.096 | 0.100 | 17,800,000 |
| OM0000003224 | RENAISSANCE SERVICES | 113,934 | 38,947 | 14 | 0.345 | 0.345 | 0.340 | 0.345 | 0.343 | 0.002 | 0.583 | 0.345 | 0.340 | 0.369 | 0.100 | 81,561,450 |
| OM0000001533 | OMINVEST | 98,326 | 32,671 | 17 | 0.330 | 0.336 | 0.330 | 0.335 | 0.334 | 0.001 | 0.299 | 0.335 | 0.334 | 0.335 | 0.100 | 223,902,418 |
| OM0000001749 | OMAN CEMENT | 27,500 | 13,611 | 17 | 0.493 | 0.496 | 0.493 | 0.494 | 0.493 | 0.001 | 0.203 | 0.494 | 0.491 | 0.495 | 0.100 | 163,451,119 |
| OM0000002168 | AL ANWAR CERAMIC | 196,000 | 23,508 | 10 | 0.127 | 0.127 | 0.119 | 0.125 | 0.125 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.125 | 0.120 | 0.127 | 0.100 | 27,500,000 |
| OM0000002275 | SHELL OMAN MARKETING | 2,000 | 1,180 | 1 | 0.590 | 0.590 | 0.590 | 0.590 | 0.590 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.590 | 0.590 | 0.649 | 0.100 | 56,050,000 |
| OM0000004768 | MADINA TAKAFUL | 18,790 | 1,589 | 5 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.084 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.100 | 14,700,000 |
| OM0000004925 | ALBATINAH POWER | 842,379 | 55,599 | 27 | 0.066 | 0.067 | 0.066 | 0.066 | 0.066 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.066 | 0.066 | 0.066 | 0.100 | 44,542,570 |
| OM0000002796 | BANK MUSCAT | 1,210,898 | 310,527 | 38 | 0.258 | 0.258 | 0.256 | 0.257 | 0.258 | -0.001 | -0.388 | 0.257 | 0.255 | 0.257 | 0.100 | 1,929,144,045 |
| OM0000001087 | OMAN UNITED INSURANCE | 4,000 | 966 | 2 | 0.240 | 0.243 | 0.240 | 0.243 | 0.244 | -0.001 | -0.410 | 0.243 | 0.241 | 0.243 | 0.100 | 24,300,000 |
| OM0000003968 | OOREDOO | 121,771 | 24,240 | 25 | 0.202 | 0.202 | 0.198 | 0.199 | 0.200 | -0.001 | -0.500 | 0.199 | 0.197 | 0.199 | 0.100 | 129,537,902 |
| OM0000009072 | OQ GAS NETWORKS | 2,230,081 | 288,370 | 97 | 0.129 | 0.130 | 0.129 | 0.129 | 0.130 | -0.001 | -0.769 | 0.129 | 0.129 | 0.130 | 0.100 | 558,650,486 |
| OM0000003026 | OMAN TELECOM | 267,548 | 218,532 | 51 | 0.822 | 0.822 | 0.813 | 0.815 | 0.822 | -0.007 | -0.852 | 0.815 | 0.815 | 0.819 | 0.100 | 611,250,000 |
| OM0000004735 | SEMBCORP SALALAH | 236,889 | 21,520 | 37 | 0.094 | 0.094 | 0.090 | 0.090 | 0.091 | -0.001 | -1.099 | 0.090 | 0.089 | 0.090 | 0.100 | 85,911,476 |
| OM0000004933 | AL SUWADI POWER | 1,141,709 | 74,152 | 29 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.065 | -0.001 | -1.538 | 0.064 | 0.064 | 0.067 | 0.100 | 45,722,006 |
| OM0000003398 | SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK | 2,801,328 | 375,635 | 61 | 0.135 | 0.136 | 0.133 | 0.133 | 0.136 | -0.003 | -2.206 | 0.133 | 0.133 | 0.133 | 0.100 | 880,093,754 |
| Total | 20 | 10,825,828 | 1,912,405 | 528 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Parallel Market**

| ISIN | SECURITY NAME | VOLUME | TURNOVER | TRADES | OPEN PRICE | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE PR. | PREV. CLOSE | DIFF (RO) | DIFF % | LAST PR. | LAST BID | LAST OFFER | PAR VALUE | MARKET CAP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| OM0000003521 | GALFAR ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING | 620 | 47 | 2 | 0.076 | 0.078 | 0.076 | 0.078 | 0.076 | 0.002 | 2.632 | 0.078 | 0.075 | 0.078 | 0.100 | 15,832,943 |
| OM0000005963 | PHOENIX POWER | 1,998,943 | 119,805 | 26 | 0.058 | 0.061 | 0.058 | 0.059 | 0.058 | 0.001 | 1.724 | 0.059 | 0.059 | 0.060 | 0.100 | 86,293,486 |
| OM0000001160 | NATIONAL GAS | 102,633 | 7,845 | 7 | 0.076 | 0.077 | 0.076 | 0.077 | 0.076 | 0.001 | 1.316 | 0.077 | 0.076 | 0.078 | 0.100 | 6,545,000 |
| OM0000008447 | OMAN REIT FUND | 20,500 | 1,579 | 2 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.077 | 0.076 | 0.001 | 1.316 | 0.077 | 0.074 | 0.081 | 0.100 | 39,164,610 |
| OM0000002267 | GULF MUSHROOM PRODUCTS | 10,000 | 2,400 | 2 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.240 | 0.238 | 0.002 | 0.840 | 0.240 | 0.238 | 0.244 | 0.100 | 10,983,792 |
| OM0000001368 | CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES | 10,000 | 800 | 1 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.080 | 0.080 | 0.081 | 0.100 | 5,000,000 |
| OM0000001707 | OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY | 659 | 1,601 | 3 | 2.430 | 2.430 | 2.430 | 2.430 | 2.430 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 2.430 | 0.000 | 2.430 | 0.100 | 217,971,000 |
| OM0000002226 | ALJAZEERA SERVICES | 18,000 | 3,240 | 4 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.185 | 0.100 | 7,711,738 |
| OM0000002648 | NATIONAL FINANCE | 2,180 | 294 | 1 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.135 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.135 | 0.130 | 0.135 | 0.100 | 77,450,078 |
| OM0000003661 | VOLTAMP ENERGY | 1,008 | 574 | 2 | 0.560 | 0.580 | 0.560 | 0.580 | 0.580 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.580 | 0.560 | 0.570 | 0.100 | 47,213,595 |
| OM0000004420 | BANK NIZWA | 10,491 | 1,060 | 3 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.101 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.101 | 0.100 | 0.101 | 0.100 | 225,932,256 |
| OM0000007084 | MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION | 16,000 | 1,040 | 5 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.065 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.065 | 0.064 | 0.065 | 0.100 | 10,110,776 |
| OM0000008868 | THE PEARL REIF | 4,000 | 480 | 1 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.119 | 0.119 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.120 | 0.100 | 70,380,989 |
| OM0000009569 | JABAL REIF | 3,749,500 | 389,948 | 1 | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.104 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.104 | 0.101 | 0.104 | 0.100 | 18,096,000 |
| OM0000009908 | OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ) | 7,787,762 | 801,017 | 81 | 0.102 | 0.103 | 0.101 | 0.102 | 0.102 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.102 | 0.101 | 0.102 | 0.040 | 352,868,067 |
| OM0000003000 | Al MAHA PETROLEUM PRODUCTS MARKETING | 5,850 | 6,026 | 2 | 1.030 | 1.030 | 1.030 | 1.030 | 1.034 | -0.004 | -0.387 | 1.030 | 1.020 | 1.130 | 0.100 | 71,070,000 |
| OM0000005005 | ALMAHA CERAMICS | 80,788 | 9,211 | 3 | 0.114 | 0.125 | 0.114 | 0.125 | 0.126 | -0.001 | -0.794 | 0.125 | 0.114 | 0.125 | 0.100 | 6,875,000 |
| OM0000001400 | OMAN FLOUR MILLS | 5,750 | 2,493 | 2 | 0.434 | 0.434 | 0.430 | 0.430 | 0.434 | -0.004 | -0.922 | 0.430 | 0.430 | 0.433 | 0.100 | 67,725,000 |
| OM0000004248 | SMN POWER HOLDING | 647,105 | 223,308 | 63 | 0.349 | 0.349 | 0.344 | 0.345 | 0.349 | -0.004 | -1.146 | 0.345 | 0.340 | 0.345 | 0.100 | 68,874,282 |
| OM0000009759 | OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION | 5,427,009 | 1,751,280 | 129 | 0.324 | 0.325 | 0.320 | 0.320 | 0.324 | -0.004 | -1.235 | 0.320 | 0.320 | 0.310 | 0.010 | 2,560,000,000 |
| OM0000008710 | BARKA DESALINATION | 2,000 | 244 | 2 | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.125 | -0.003 | -2.400 | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.122 | 0.100 | 9,213,684 |
| OM0000001178 | MUSCAT GASES | 1,500 | 133 | 2 | 0.090 | 0.090 | 0.085 | 0.085 | 0.090 | -0.005 | -5.556 | 0.085 | 0.086 | 0.095 | 0.100 | 2,550,000 |
| OM0000002911 | FINANCIAL CORPORATION | 5,060 | 218 | 2 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.047 | -0.004 | -8.511 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.051 | 0.100 | 3,011,288 |
| Total | 23 | 19,907,358 | 3,324,641 | 346 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

IN 2024

# Swiss central bank posts record profit of nearly $90bn

**ZURICH:** The Swiss National Bank posted a record annual profit of 80.7 billion Swiss francs ($89.50 billion) in 2024, the central bank said on Monday. Booming equity markets, rising gold prices, and a stronger US dollar helped the SNB easily beat its previous record of 54 billion francs in 2017. The result was a sharp turnaround from the 3.2 billion franc loss the SNB posted in 2023 and slightly better than the provisional figures the SNB posted in January, when it said it expected a full-year profit of around 80 billion francs.

During 2024, the SNB made a profit of 67.3 billion francs from foreign currency positions, foreign currency bonds and equities and a valuation gain of 21.2 billion from its gold holdings, Reuters reported.

The performance means the SNB can pay out to the Swiss central and regional governments for the first time since 2021, as well as a dividend to shareholders. The SNB said that after factoring in its negative distribution reserve of 53.2 billion francs, net profit came to 15.9 billion francs.-**BNA**

REPORT

# India's banking sector on recovery path, credit up to 11.4%, deposit up to 10.3% in January

**NEW DELHI:** After witnessing a downward trend since April 2024, credit growth in India has shown signs of recovery, rising to 11.4 per cent in January 2025, compared to 11.2 per cent in December 2024, according to a report by Anand Rathi Research.

This indicates an improvement in lending activity, signalling a revival in economic momentum.

The report said "After being on a downtrend since Apr'24, credit growth has started to rebound, expanding at 11.4 per cent in January 2025."

A similar trend was observed in deposit growth, which increased to 10.3 per cent in January 2025, after declining in December. This growth was mainly driven by a rebound in demand deposits and time deposits, which expanded to 6.6 per cent and continued on an upward trajectory.

Additionally, investments by banks in government securities (G-Secs) have remained strong since September 2024. The latest data shows an 11.1 per cent growth in G-Sec investments, aligning with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) norms for increasing high-quality liquid assets (HQLA) set in July 2024.

The report also mentioned that credit growth in the industrial sector remained steady at 11.7 per cent in January 2025. However, infrastructure credit saw a recovery of 1.6 per cent in January 2025 after hitting a 14-month low in December 2024.

This improvement suggests a potential revival in infrastructure financing, which is crucial for long-term economic growth.

The services sector saw a notable rise in credit growth, accelerating to 12.5 per cent YoY. This was largely supported by robust lending in the wholesale trade sector, which grew 18.1 per cent, and the real estate sector, which expanded by 13.9 per cent. The steady rise in real estate credit reflects sustained housing demand across the country.

However, the aviation sector continued to struggle, with aviation credit growth remaining weak at just 0.9 per cent YoY.

The report also noted a slowdown in personal loan growth, which stood at 11.8 per cent YoY. The decline was mainly due to reduced demand for credit card and education loans.

On the other hand, vehicle loans showed signs of recovery, growing at 9.7 per cent YoY, supported by rising passenger vehicle sales. Meanwhile, housing credit moderated slightly but remained steady at 11 per cent YoY, indicating continued interest in home purchases.

Looking ahead, the RBI's recent decision to reduce risk weights for lending to non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) from April 2025 is expected to further support credit growth in the coming months.

With lending activity picking up, India's banking sector appears to be on a path to gradual recovery, driven by strong demand in key segments such as real estate, wholesale trade, and vehicle loans. However, challenges remain in sectors like aviation and education loans, which continue to witness slower credit offtake. -**ANI**

PRO-HOUSING POLICIES

# Growing developer confidence, strong policy support fuel China's property market recovery

**BEIJING:** Driven by a series of pro-housing policies, China's property sector has gained momentum in recent months, with increased transaction activity and renewed development vitality among real estate enterprises, signalling a shift toward a healthier and more sustainable growth trend.

With improving sentiment among home buyers, transactions for both new and second-hand homes in multiple cities have shown an upward trend since the beginning of this year, fostering a more balanced relationship between supply and demand in the market, according to industry analysts.

### Residential home sales

New residential home sales in Beijing surged by 47.11 percent year on year last month, with 2,295 units recorded in online sales contracts. Meanwhile, second-hand home transactions, a key segment of the city's property market, saw a 92.3 percent increase during the same period, according to data from leading real estate website Fang.com.

In Hangzhou, a second-tier city and hub for leading sci-tech firms, the number of daily visits to a new residential site in Xihu District, developed by Vanke, surpassed 100 groups during the first weekend after the Spring Festival holiday, double the figure from the previous week.

This trend can be attributed to improving customer sentiment, driven by the city's rising prominence and promising development prospects, according to the project's marketing manager.

The growing turnover volume has helped relieve destocking pressure in the property market. -**Xinhua**

# CONNECT PRINT EDITION

## RENT

## CARGO

## VACANCY

- 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

Muscat 9679 0594
9679 0684
Sohar 9731 6218
Salalah 9429 9325
www.orbit-oman.com
أوربت ORBIT Car Rental & Lease

## JOB VACANCY

**URGENTLY REQUIRED**

Experienced
**CHEF/COOK**
**(Arabic & Indian Dishes)**
for a reputed family in Muscat.

**Contact: 99735820**

**URGENTLY REQUIRED**

**PROJECT MANAGER**
BE Mechanical Engineering, 10-8 years experience in piping & cross country pipeline in Gulf.

**Estimation Engineer**
BE Mechanical Engineering, 10-8 years experience in proposal and bid preparation.

Interested candidate can send their CVs at:
**pipemasteroman@gmail.com**

**REQUIRED URGENTLY**

**LEADING CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IN OMAN MOE EXPERIENCE CANDIATES FOR THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

- **CIVIL QS** (BE CIVIL expat) 3-5 exp. to be based in HO
- **CIVIL PROJECT LEAD ENGINEER** (BE Civil expat) 7-10 exp.
- **CIVIL PROJECT PLANNIING/QS ENGNEER** (BE Civil) 4-7 exp.
- **CIVIL PROJECT SITE ENGNEER** (BE/DIP Civil expat) 3-5 exp.
- **CIVIL PROJECT SITE FOREMAN/SUPERVISOR** (Diploma expat) 3-5 exp.
- **CIVIL PROJECT LAND SURVEYOR/SITE ENGNEER** (BE Civil) 3-5 exp.
- **CIVIL SITE STORE/ADMIN** 3-4 exp.

Please send in your CV's to Email: dak.hr@dakoman.com
or WhatsApp: +968 94041266 / +968 96636121

**REQUIRED URGENTLY**

**LEADING CONSTRUCTION COMPANY IN OMAN MOE EXPERIENCE SUB-CONTRACTORS FOR THE SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

- CIVIL STRUCTURE SUB-CONTRACTOR
- CIVIL FINISHING SUB-CONTRACTOR
- SOLAR SYSTEM SUB-CONTRACTOR
- LABORATORY CHEMISTRY SUB-CONTRACTOR
- MECHANICAL STEEL SHED SUB-CONTRACTOR
- PLAYFEILD GROUND SUB-CONTRACTOR
- SCHOOL-CLASS ROOM FURNITURE SUPPLY CONTRACTOR
- MEP SUB-CONTRACTOR
- HVAC SUB-CONTRACTOR
- ELV SUB-CONTRACTOR

Please Contact Us on Call or WhatsApp:
**+968 79313357 / +968 94041266**

## JOB WANTED

**FINANCE**
Indian, MBA, Finance with 20 yrs experience in business with complete knowledge in Finance, VAT, Credit Control, Admin, HR, Warehouse with SAP knowledge & D/L.
**Contact: 78031718**

**EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR**
Qualified and Highly Professional 25, F, Tunisian, Masters in Project Management and Entrepreneurship with 2 years Experience in MNC as Corporate Events Coordinator. Additional experience in administration, content creation and social media management. Fluent in Arabic, French, English. Seeking suitable position.
**Contact: +968 76498724,**
**Email: tbibmarwa2@gmail.com**

**STORE MANAGER**
Seeking job as a **STORE MANAGER** (retail) **FASHION & FMCG.**
Experienced in store operations, inventory management and business growth at Raymond Lifestyle. Ready to contribute skills to a dynamic team.
**Contact: +968 7967560**
**WA +91 8055514441**

**OMANI HSE ENGINEER**
**Approved Omani HSE Engineer** 7+ yrs (Approved, PTW holder, OPAL valid license, IOSH, NEBOSH IGC & other required courses).
**Contact: +968 79975864**

**ENGINEER**
Indian QHSE Engineer, 5 yrs Oman experience, NEBOSH IGC, IRCA lead auditor (ISO 9001/14001), ASNT Level 2 certified. Seeking suitable position.
**Phone: +968 78177146**
**Email: jithinkaithapola@gmail.com**

**ENGINEER**
**Indian, BE Civil Engineer** with 10 years experience (8 years in Oman & 2 years in India) in commercial and residential project with valid oman D/L. Currently available in Oman with local NOC / Relese.
**Contact: +968 7900 6803**
**Email: thirumurugan9360@gmail.com**

## RENT

**High Quality Warehouse Available for Rent in Rumays**

1) 500 sq m
2) 600 sq m
3) 1000 sq m
3) 1800 sq m
5) 3000 sq m

**For inquiries, please contact:**
**97836957 / 99365547**

**RENT OR SALE?**
**Send email to:**
**classifieds@timesofoman.com**

## SERVICE

**PEST CONTROL**
Al-Basheq Grey Trad. & Cont. LLC
*100% Professional & Competitive rate!!!*
Anti Termite, Cockroaches, Bed Bugs, Ants, Rodent,
On monthly, yearly or one time service.
All We use quality products which approved by oman ministry.
Harmless & Odourless
CALL US: 91 45 22 33
Email: albasheqgrey@gmail.com

**Pest control,** Contact: 92326955 Gulfa international LLC.

**Civil maintenance, gypsum,** painting, carpentry,plumbing, glass partition, office fitout. Contact: 94160282

**Services of Carpet Shampoo**, marble & tile polishing, pest control & Anti-termite treatment, General cleaning painting, Plumbing, Electrical, shifting.
Glow Services Trading LLC
Contact: 24810137, 99450130

## NRI

**7 cents of residential plot** Edappally, Container road, 10 minutes from Lulu for sale. Contact: 99381561

## SALE

**Beauty parlour** for sale in Azaiba.
Contact: 93792799

## CHANGE OF NAME

I, Surekha Jasmine (Holder of Indian Passport No. N7119623) daughter of Yalla Prasanna Kumar having permanent residence in 15-114-1, Prathibha Bharathi Nagar, Kothepeta rural, Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh 523157. (Complete postal address in India) and presently residing in Intercity Hotel Muscat, PO Box 2040, PC 133, Al Wizarat area, Al Khuwair Muscat (Complete postal address in Oman) intend to change my name from **Surekha Jasmine Shrikanth Vooshakoyala** (old name) to **Surekha Jasmine Yalla** (New name) for all practical purpose. Any objection towards my name change may please be communicated to Embassy of India, Muscat. Diplomatic Quarters, Al Khuwair P.O. Box 1727, Postal Code 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman.

Send email to classified@timesofoman.com or Call: 24 72 66 66 (Ext: 815 / 462 / 354)

Email: dailyguide@timesofoman.com
classifieds@timesofoman.com
Tel.: 24726666
Ext: 815 / 462 / 354

# CONNECT

## JOB VACANCY

### ENGINEER

**Urgently required** BE Mechanical Engineer specialized in air conditioning, Send CV to: mm (@theimcworldwide.com

### MANAGER

**Urgently required** Project Manager for MEP Send CV to: mm (@theimcworldwide.com

### MISCELLENOEUS

**Electrician, plumber, finishing carpenter and cleaner**
Contact: 99657906
Email: info@ruwicomplex.com

### MECHANICAL/ TECHNICAL

**Urgently required** AC Technician required minimum 3-5yrs experience Send CV to: mm (@theimcworldwide.com

### SALES/MARKETING

**Urgently required** showroom sales vacancy for construction tools.Tally experience is must, good communication skill.
Email: srik7786@icloud.com

**Urgently required** outdoor sales person for power tools & machines. Relevant industry experience with D/L is must.
Email: srik7786@icloud.com.

## JOB WANTED

### ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

**Indian, female, (MBA finance)** having more than 15 yrs of experience in Oman in finance & accounts seeks suitable senior position.
Contact: 94953826, 92824146

**Indian (male), 20 yrs Oman exp,** knowledge of finalisation of accounts, VAT, TAX, LCLTR, & ERP Oracle. Contact: 92383882

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

**CMA US pursuing, MBA** in finance over 12 yrs GCC experience looking for Senior Accountant position.
Contact: 76460484

### ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

**Asst. Manager, Sr. executive** operations Indian male, MBA finance, 21+yrs experience. Leading a large team of service operations. Urgently seeking placements. Contact: 93451519
Email: anirudhadat@gmail.com

**Indian, male, accountant** with total 13 yrs GCC experience job seeking. Contact: 76406757

**Indian Female,** BSc Mathematics , DIFA, Tally, MS Office, Data entry. 4 years plus experience in customer relationship.seeking a suitable position. Currently available in Muscat. Contact: +968 78696265
Email: livyakx@gmail.com

**Finance manager** with 15 yrs of experience in oil & gas multinational company looking for suitable placement. Contact: 95230609

**Experienced accounts,** finance professional with 20+ yrs of experience in Oman and an MBA specialization in finance seeking a suitable opportunity. Holds a valid Oman D/L. Contact: 92916746

**Sri Lankan Senior accountant,** having Bachelor's Degree. 7+ yrs of experience. Expertise in finalization, audit, budgeting, MIS, VAT, income tax.
Contact : 97092478

**B.Com graduate** with 7 yrs experience as an accountant,also experienced in store operations & document comtrolling. knowledge in tally, MS excel. MS office, VAT, tax filling & other finance operations. Contact: +968 76411551, WA+91 8547107262

**Experienced finance** professional looking for a suitable senior level opportunity. Contact: 78581435

**Indian graduate** having 2 yrs experience in accounts & sales department. Contact: 7642 0699,
Email: saqibahmed0319@gmail.com

**Sr. Accountant, accountant,** 16 yrs of experience in Oman. Accounts up to finalisation and auditing. Contact: 94001764.

**Junior accountant, Indian,** male B.com graduate 2yrs experience in Oman seeking suitable job.
Contact: 78047716

**Highly skilled Chief accountant** looking for suitable position.
Contact: +968 79888153

**Indian male,** having 2.5 yrs of experience in Accounts, finance, admin looking for job.
Contact: +968 79414996,
Email: sajadzn29@gmail.com

### ACCOUNTS/FINANCE

**Indian male** with 4+ yrs exp. in Oman, worked as Accounts & admin executive Bachelor Degree in Management (BBA) with valid D/L, ready to join immediately.
Contact: 93536020,
Email: naseemtm24@gmail.com

### ADMINISTRATION

**Dynamic and well-experienced** professional: 5 yrs of Dubai and 4.5 yrs of Muscat experience in operations management, business excellence or key account management looking for new challenges. Contact: 96766702,
Email: ilyas3299@gmail.com

**Indian, male,** have experience in project coordinator, sales and marketing have diploma in mech, valid D/L. Contact: 95645241

**Indian (M),** Oman experience in projects, corporate communications, CEO office.
WhatsApp: +968 97457945.

**Indian male MBA(HR) & B tech** (Comp) with nearly 10 yrs of over all experience seeks job.
Contact: +968 94168194,
+91 9745020204,
Email: gokulgopan91@hotmail.com

### ARCHITECT

**Qualified junior Architect** with experience in software such as AutoCAD, lumion, sketchUp, revit, 3Ds max etc. looking for job in Oman.
Contact: +968 78902260, E-mail: ar.mohamedadhelka@gmail.com

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

**Graduate Architect** with valid Oman D/L. Proficient in various Design software. Looking for Architect, interior designer roles.
Contact: 93249129,
Email: psmenez2015@gmail.com

### DRIVER

**Looking for driving job** with 15 yrs experience.
Contact: 78037801

**Looking for driving job** have car.
Contact: 98586920

**Looking for driving job.**
Contact: +968 99532361

### DRIVER

**Looking for driving job** with 2 yrs experience. Contact: 97995898

### EDUCATION/TRAINING

**Chemistry teacher** with 7 yrs experience of teaching IGCSE chemistry (Pakistani). Currently in Oman. Contact: +968 78684306

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

### ENGINEER

**Total 15 yrs experience,** 8 yrs in Muscat as project engineer,cordinator Seeking an opportunity in Oman with valid Oman D/L. .Presently in Oman.
Contract: 92358734,
Email: rezaullah.786@gmail.com

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

**Indian male** with 10 yrs. Experience in Oman, have 3 yrs Electrical diploma, General maintenance, valid Oman D/L.
Contact: 93220672

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

**Indian, male, Mechanical engineer** with 1yr experience in HVAC engineering, looking for a suitable job. Contact: 76342333
Email: mohdyaz750@gmail.com

**BE Civil site, project engineer** (Keralite) having 12 years of experience in Oman looking for a suitable position as a site engineer (part time/full-time) in any reputed companies. having valid Oman D/L. Contact: 91281006, 78385414

**Civil Engineer** with expertise in Software such as revit, autocad,naviswork, sketchup and having experience in site supervision is looking for job in Oman.
Contact: +968 78441832, Email: shamilabdulla664@gmail.com

**BE Project Engineer**, 12 -13 yrs. experience. Contact: 93850875,
Email: abdulcivilco2015@gmail.com

### ENGINEER

**Indian, male,** Diploma Civil site engineer with 27 yrs experience in Oman looking for a job,
Contact: 99423274, Email: mmthomasvarghese@gmail.com

**Civil engineer** with 5 yrs (India) & 1 yr (Muscat) experience as Site engineer,NOC available from company seeking placement. immediate joining.
Contact +968 78230150, Email: ajaykumar270212@gmail.com

**Civil engineer supervisor,** 14 yrs experience civil & tower project with D/L & own visa.
Contact: 78002980

**Mechanical engineer** with over 4 yrs experience in sales and operations having Oman D/L with MSc in Engineering management from UK available to join immediately.
Contact: 96111283,
Email: dobin.mathew@gmail.com.

**B-Tech Civil Engineer** with total 16yrs GCC experience include 11 yrs Oman experience, project manager job seeking.
Contact: 97733497

**BE Project engineer** 12-13 yrs experience.
Contact: 93850875,
Email: abdulcivilco2015@gmail.com

### LOGISTIC

**Sudanese** Supply chain professional with CSCP certificate, MBA and 10 yrs experience in supply chain, logistics, procurement and project management.
Contact: 95272472.
Email: kemeir@hotmail.com

### MANAGER

**Indian, male,** having 19 yrs of experience in manufacturing & FMCG operations management 15 yrs in Oman market , looking for opportunity to join immediate.
Contact: 77431223,
Email: dev4ducati@gmail.com

**Finance manager** with 15 yrs of experience in oil & gas multinational company looking for suitable placement.
Contact: 95230609

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

### MEDICAL

**Clinical pathologist** with Oman license looking for suitable job.
Contact: 90158005

**Veterinary doctor** having BVSC & AH degree from India with 5 yrs experience in animal health, poultry and meat production processing, Seeking a suitable position.
Contact: 76409087, Email: dramitchauhan0@gmail.com

### PROCUREMENT/ PURCHASE

**Keralite, purchase assistant,** store keeper 10 yrs working experience in Oman with valid Oman D/L(light) Looking for suitable job.
Contact: 98615731,
Email: sanalk73@gmail.com

**Purchase officer,** incharge with 7 yrs of GCC experience seeks placement .
Contact: +968 9954 8041

**Procurement engineer,** Sudanese, 10yrs experience in Oman,MEP, firefighting, projects, D/L.
Contact: 79027138 .

### SALES/MARKETING

**Looking for saleman job,** 10 yrs experience in building materials,tiles & sanitary.
Contact: 76396606

**Indian Mechanical Engineer** with D/L. 1 yr experience and NEBOSH IGC certified, Seeking job opportunities. Contact: 79860144

**Indian male, Sales executive** (MBA in Marketing) with 10 yrs of experience in FMCG & automobile with strong communication skills, holding valid Oman. D/L.
Contact: 92350798

**Indian male MBA** graduated specialized with Marketing & HR (fresher). Looking for suitable positions . Currently in Muscat Oman.
Contact: +968 71084371,
Email: ccrashid9@gmail.com

Find Job
Send email to:
classifieds@timesofoman.com

LIFESTYLE

# OSCARS 2025:

# 'Anora' dominates with Best Picture award, Adrien Brody takes home trophy for Best Actor

The 97th Academy Awards were held on March 3 in Los Angeles, Hollywood, California. 'Anora' has emerged as the night's big winner, taking home five Academy Awards, including the coveted Best Picture award.

The film, directed by Sean Baker, also won awards for Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Editing, and Best Actress for Mikey Madison.

Adrien Brody took home the Oscar for Best Actor at the 2025 Academy Awards, triumphing over a talented group of nominees, including Timothee Chalamet for A Complete Unknown, Sebastian Stan for The Apprentice, Colman Domingo for Sing Sing, and Ralph Fiennes for Conclave.

Walter Salles' directorial 'I'm Still Here' won the Best International Feature Film Oscar on Sunday, marking the first time that a Brazilian entry has won in the category.

The film emerged victorious by defeating France's "Emilia Perez," Germany's "The Seed of the Sacred Fig," Denmark's "The Girl With the Needle" and Latvia's "Flow."

French composer duo Clement Ducol and Camille won the Oscar for Best Original Song for their track, 'El Mal,' from the film Emilia Perez.

The song in Audiard's operatic drama is a three-minute tour de force for Saldana as lawyer Rita Castro, a fantasy in which she dances around a room filled with the rich and powerful, decrying the hypocrisy of those responsible for the murders of thousands of Mexicans during the drug wars.

Zoe Saldana and Kieran Culkin surprised few with their wins for Best Supporting Actress and Actor for Netflix's Emilia Perez and Searchlight's A Real Pain, respectively. They barreled through awards season with one win after another, and these are the first Oscars for both, reported Deadline.

Peter Straughan took Adapted Screenplay for Focus Features' Conclave. It's also his first Oscar on his second nom, but the script wasn't eligible for the WGA prize due to eligibility rules, as reported by Deadline.

British dramatist Peter Straughan won the Oscar for best adapted screenplay for his adaptation of Robert Harris's papal thriller Conclave.

'Conclave' follows Cardinal Lawrence (Fiennes), tasked with running the conclave process after the unexpected death of the beloved Pope. Once the Catholic Church's most powerful leaders have gathered from around the world and are locked together in the Vatican halls, Lawrence finds himself at the centre of a conspiracy.He discovers a secret that could shake the very foundation of The Church.

The cast of 'Conclave' includes Sergio Castellitto, John Lithgow, Isabella Rossellini and Ralph Fiennes among many others.

Conan O'Brien served as host for this year's ceremony, The Academy Awards are executive produced by showrunner Raj Kapoor, Katy Mullan and Rob Pain. Producers include Sarah Levine Hall, Taryn Hurd, Jeff Ross and Mike Sweeney. Hamish Hamilton serves as director.

Paul Tazewell made history by becoming the first man of colour to win the Oscar for Best Costume Design. Tazewell, a previous nominee for "West Side Story," already has an Emmy award ("The Wiz Live") and Tony award ("Hamilton") under his belt. He triumphed over fellow costume designers: Arianne Phillips ("A Complete Unknown"), Linda Muir ("Nosferatu"), Lisy Christl ("Conclave") and Janty Yates and David Crossman ("Gladiator II").

Latvian director Gints Zilbalodis' "Flow" won the Oscar for best animated feature.

**CHECK OUT THE COMPLETE LIST OF WINNERS**

BEST PICTURE
Anora (Neon)
A Cre Films Production
Alex Coco, Samantha Quan and Sean Baker, Producers

ACTRESS IN A LEADING ROLE
Mikey Madison in Anora (Neon)

DIRECTING
Anora (Neon) Sean Baker

ACTOR IN A LEADING ROLE
Adrien Brody in The Brutalist (A24)

MUSIC (ORIGINAL SCORE)
The Brutalist (A24)
Daniel Blumberg

INTERNATIONAL FEATURE FILM
I'm Still Here (Brazil)
A VideoFilmes Producoes Artisticas Production

CINEMATOGRAPHY
The Brutalist (A24)
Lol Crawley

LIVE ACTION SHORT FILM
I'm Not a Robot (The New Yorker)
Victoria Warmerdam and Trent

VISUAL EFFECTS
Dune: Part Two (Warner Bros.)
Paul Lambert, Stephen James, Rhys Salcombe and Gerd Nefzer

SOUND
Dune: Part Two (Warner Bros.)
Gareth John, Richard King, Ron Bartlett and Doug Hemphill

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE FILM
No Other Land
An Antipode Films Production
Basel Adra, Rachel Szor, Hamdan Ballal and Yuval Abraham

DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM
The Only Girl in the Orchestra (Netflix)
Molly O'Brien and Lisa Remington

MUSIC (ORIGINAL SONG)
El Mal from Emilia Perez (Netflix)
Music by Clement Ducol and Camille
Lyric by Clement Ducol, Camille and Jacques Audiard

PRODUCTION DESIGN
Wicked (Universal)
Production Design: Nathan Crowley
Set Decoration: Lee Sandales

ACTRESS IN A SUPPORTING ROLE
Zoe Saldana in Emilia Perez (Netflix)

FILM EDITING
Anora (Neon) Sean Baker

MAKEUP AND HAIRSTYLING
The Substance (Mubi)
Pierre-Olivier Persin, Stephanie Guillon and Marilyne Scarselli

WRITING (ADAPTED SCREENPLAY)
Conclave (Focus Features)
Screenplay by Peter Straughan

WRITING (ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY)
Anora (Neon)
Written by Sean Baker

COSTUME DESIGN
Wicked (Universal)
Paul Tazewell

ANIMATED SHORT FILM
In the Shadow of the Cypress
Shirin Sohani and Hossein Molayemi

ANIMATED FEATURE FILM
Flow (Sideshow/Janus Films)
Gints Zilbalodis, Matiss Kaza, Ron Dyens and Gregory Zalcman

ACTOR IN A SUPPORTING ROLE
Kieran Culkin in A Real Pain (Searchlight)

# SPORTS

# Barcelona climb back to summit

Ronald Araujo and Robert Lewandowski were among the scorers for the winners

**BARCELONA:** Barcelona reclaimed top spot in La Liga with a comfortable 4-0 victory over 10-man Real Sociedad on Sunday.

Atletico Madrid had leapfrogged them following their 1-0 win over Athletic Club on Saturday.

However, Hansi Flick's side easily restored their one-point advantage - and extended their winning run to six games - in the title race with goals from Gerard Martin, Marc Casado, Ronald Araujo and Robert Lewandowski.

Ninth-placed Sociedad, who face Manchester United in the last 16 of the Europa League on Thursday, March 6, came out on top when the two sides last met in November, winning 1-0.

However, they were up always up against it at the Estadi Olímpic Lluís Companys after defender Aritz Elustondo received a straight red card in the 17th minute for bringing down a goal bound Dani Olmo.

Barcelona capitalised on their advantage just eight minutes later, Lamine Yamal losing his marker in the box before combining with Olmo to pick out fullback Martin to finish at the back post. Four minutes later, Olmo was once again involved, with his strike from the edge of the box deflecting in off Casado. For both Martin and Casado, it was their first Barcelona goals.

The hosts didn't have to wait long for a third goal. Barely 60 seconds after Pedri had rattled the woodwork with a curling long-range effort, Araujo headed home an inswinging corner from Raphinha. Poland striker Lewandowski sealed the rout on the hour mark, sticking out a foot to direct Araujo's shot beyond a helpless Alex Remiro in the visiting goal.

Elsewhere, Umar Sadiq's late goal earned lowly Valencia a point in an entertaining 3-3 draw with Osasuna.

Valencia twice led through Diego Lopez and Sadiq but were pegged back on both occasions by Aimar Oroz, and Ante Budimir's 45th-minute penalty looked to have earned Osasuna the win until Sadiq's 87th-minute intervention.

Also, Mallorca slipped two points off the top six after they were held to a 1-1 draw by struggling Alaves. Takuma Asano netted for the hosts in only the ninth minute but Kike Garcia equalised for Alaves midway through the second half.

Diego Garcia scored an injury-time winner to hand Leganes a much-needed 1-0 victory over Getafe. - Agencies

FA CUP: FIFTH ROUND

# Fulham knock out Man Utd to book spot in quarters

**LONDON:** Fulham goalkeeper Bernd Leno was the hero with two saves in the penalty shootout to knock Manchester United out of the FA Cup with a 4-3 win on penalties at Old Trafford on Sunday.

After three precise spot-kicks from both sides, Leno denied Victor Lindelof, then, after skipper Antonee Robinson had extended Fulham's perfect record, the German also kept out Joshua Zirkzee's effort to send the Cottagers into the quarter-finals.

Fulham had taken the lead in first-half stoppage time when Calvin Bassey was left free at the far post to head in from close range after Rodrigo Muniz had flicked on a corner.

But, days after former United captain Roy Keane had condemned the influence of current skipper Bruno Fernandes, the Portuguese dragged his side level with a superb equaliser, driving home a low shot from the edge of the area after Diogo Dalot had found him with a pass from the touchline.

Both sides could have won it without the need for penalties. Emile Smith Rowe, denied superbly by Andre Onana before the home side levelled, was repelled by the Cameroon international again before the tie went to extra time.

Then, 17-year-old United substitute Chido Obi flicked a shot towards goal that Leno kept out with an outstanding reaction save. It added to a catalogue of saves from Leno that also included denying United substitute Alejandro Garnacho. The real heroics were saved for the shootout though as Fulham continue to dream of emulating their only FA Cup final appearance in 1975.

"From the first day we were really serious in the competition. It is a big competition for us," said Fulham boss Marco Silva, who says his side are "in a better place" than when they were knocked out at Old Trafford two seasons ago.

"We are more mature but you can see the identity is the same. Everyone can see Fulham is a very good club in the Premier League."

**Bournemouth to face City, Preston to host Aston Villa**

Bournemouth have been drawn at home to Manchester City in the FA Cup quarter-finals.

Preston, the only Championship side left in the FA Cup, are at home to Unai Emery's Aston Villa. Fulham host Crystal Palace in a London derby.

And Brighton will be at home to either Nottingham Forest or Ipswich, who play their fifth-round tie on Monday night.

Aside from 2023 victors Manchester City, Ipswich are the most recent FA Cup winners (1978) left in it. Fulham, Palace, Bournemouth and Brighton have never won the cup.

The quarter-final ties will take place on the weekend of Saturday, March 29. - Agencies

OMAN CRICKET

# ISWK defeat ISC MKW to lift Women's League title

**MUSCAT:** ISWK emerged as champions of the Oman Cricket Women's League 2024-25, securing a hard-fought 10-run victory over ISC MKW (Indian Social Club – Mangalorean Konkani Wing) in the T20 final, played recently.

The title triumph capped off an unbeaten campaign for ISWK, highlighting their dominance throughout the tournament.

Batting first in the championship decider, ISWK posted an imposing 146 for 2, thanks to a stellar knock by Jayadhanya Gunasekar (69 off 63 balls) and a composed 43 off 43 by Disha Kumar.

Chasing 147, ISC MKW put up a strong fight, with Suhaani Dadhwal leading the charge with 62 off 52 balls.

However, her dismissal in the 16th over proved crucial, as ISC MKW fell short and were bowled out for 136.

The league featured eight teams, which showcased the growing strength of women's cricket in Oman.

ISWK and ISC MKW reached the final unbeaten, after overcoming Pakistan Women and Women's Cricket Sohar respectively in the semifinals.

At the post-match ceremony, Varun Khimji, Board Advisor – Oman Cricket, and Duleep Mendis, Chief Development Officer – Oman Cricket, presented the awards. Jayadhanya was named best batter, Disha took home the best bowler award, and Priyanka Mendonca was crowned Player of the Tournament for her all-round performances.

The 2024-25 season reaffirmed Oman Cricket's commitment to women's cricket development, building on the success of the #Cricket4Her initiative, launched in October 2023.

With growing participation and competitive intensity, the Women's League continues to be a cornerstone of the sport's expansion in the Sultanate.

OMAN SAILING

# 15 sailors picked for newly formed Asyad Sailing Team

**MUSCAT:** Fifteen promising young sailors have been selected to join the newly formed Asyad Sailing Team, following an intense two-week Winter Training Camp at the Mussanah Sailing School.

The team will represent Oman in a series of prestigious regional and international competitions throughout 2025.

The selected sailors will compete in the ILCA 4 and ILCA 6 classes, showcasing their skills at major events, including the GCC Beach Games in April, the Oman Sailing Championships in August, and the 13th edition of Mussanah Race Week in October.

Those picked for the ILCA 4 class include Hassan Al Wahaibi, Tamim Al Balushi, Saoud Al Shaqsi, Firas Al Nabhani, Abdulrahman Al Hadi, Hassan Al Araimi, Firas Al Hashmi, Zakarya Al Ghafri, Sami Al Balushi, Hammad Al Mujaini, Redah Al Balushi, and Mohammad Al Balushi. Competing in the ILCA 6 category will be Abdulatif Al Qasmi, Saleh Al Balushi, and Aws Al Busaidi.

The training camp provided a platform for Oman Sail's coaching team, including Optimist coach Sultan Al Zadjali and ILCA coaches Munter Al Kindi and Ahmed Al Wahaibi, to sharpen the tactical and technical skills of the young sailors and assess their overall fitness.

Abdul Aziz Al Shidi, Oman Sail's Acting Director of Sailing, praised the commitment of the sailors. He said, "This team is an exciting prospect for the future of sailing in Oman. Their performances at the camp showed great potential, and with upcoming competitions, they have a golden opportunity to make their mark on the regional and international stage."

Mohammed Hamed Al Shuaili, VP of Corporate Support at Asyad Group, emphasised the significance of the initiative. He said, "The Asyad Sailing Team is designed to support young talent and give them the opportunity to represent Oman on the global stage. These sailors can become role models for the next generation, inspiring future champions to follow in their footsteps."

The Asyad Sailing Team recently competed in the Oman Sail Winter Cup, held from February 11–14 at Barceló Mussanah Resort, where 50 top young sailors from Oman Sail's training programmes battled it out across different categories.

With a packed competition calendar ahead, the newly formed Asyad Sailing Team is set to play a key role in Oman's growing presence in the international sailing circuit, reinforcing the country's commitment to developing world-class talent.

# COYA Muscat introduces its first Iftar experience this Ramadan

For the first time since its opening, COYA is inviting its patrons and guests to embrace the serenity of the holy month with a special Iftar set menu

**MUSCAT:** Underscoring the spirit of togetherness and reflection that the season of Ramadan instils, COYA Muscat, Oman's premier destination for exquisite Peruvian cuisine, has announced its inaugural Iftar celebration.

For the first time since its opening, COYA is inviting its patrons and guests to embrace the serenity of the holy month with a special Iftar set menu. The Iftar experience begins with a traditional welcome of laban and dates at prayer time, followed by Guacamole (avocado, aji Amarillo) served with crisp corn tortillas. Guests can choose from a comforting Sopa de Calabaza, a velvety pumpkin soup with manchego cheese and quinoa furikake, or a tangy Sopa de Tomate, a smoked tomato soup with goat cheese and coriander.

The menu includes the refreshing Ensalada de COYA (baby gem lettuce, house dressing, pumpkin and goat cheese), the savouryTequenos de maiz y queso (corn, cheese, chilli, coriander aioli), the hearty Anticucho de Setas (forest mushrooms, aji panca, parsley), the vibrant Trio de Maiz (grilled corn, jumbo corn, crispy corn, red chilli dressing), the succulent Gyoza de Langostinos (prawn and Chilean sea bass gyoza, bok choi, aji panca ponzu), and the appetising Anticucho de Pollo (chicken, aji amarillo, garlic).

The main course features the succulent Pollo a la Parilla (corn fed baby chicken, aji panca, coriander), the comforting Cazuela de Hongos (bomba rice hot pot, mushrooms, crispy enoki, seaweed butter), the seafood-rich Parihuela de Mariscos (mussels, squid, coconut, green mango), and the flavourful Lomo Saltado (wagyu tenderloin, smoked soy butter, crispy potatoes, corn rice), along with a side of crispy Patatas Bravas (crispy potatoes, spicy tomato huancaina sauce).

For dessert, the choices on offer are Pastel de Pistacho y Dátiles (a pistachio and date cake with vanilla), Churros de Naranja (zesty orange and lime churros with milk chocolate and dulce de leche sauce), or the refreshing Chicha Morada (a purple corn colada with wild berries and orange shortbread).

True to COYA's commitment to excellence in every dish, the Iftar menu has been designed to delight the senses, offering a rich and flavourful dining experience. The highlight, of course, is its stunning outdoor seating area, which is air-conditioned for comfort and located next to the pool at The St. Regis, providing the perfect setting to enjoy a relaxed yet elegant meal with loved ones.

Emphasising that the spirit of Ramadan is about togetherness, reflection, and celebration, Mohammed Bennani, Restaurant General Manager, said, "We look forward to welcoming guests and providing them with an exceptional dining experience that reflects the traditions of Ramadan while also showcasing our unique Peruvian cuisine."

COYA Muscat promises to deliver an exceptional Ramadan experience, combining scrumptious food, an inviting atmosphere, and a serene outdoor setting. Whether dining indoors or enjoying the breezy terrace, COYA Muscat promises an unforgettable Iftar celebration that brings together great food, exceptional ambience, and the warmth of the season.

RECOGNITION

## Bank Nizwa's focus on excellence, innovation, and social responsibility earns top honours at IFN Awards

**MUSCAT:** Once again demonstrating its industry preeminence, Bank Nizwa, the leading and most trusted Islamic bank in the Sultanate of Oman, recently secured multiple accolades at the prestigious Islamic Finance News (IFN) Awards 2024, held in Dubai.

The bank was honoured with the 'Best Islamic Bank in Oman' award and the 'Best Islamic Retail Bank in Oman' award, while also earning three landmark deal-based awards— 'IFN Ijarah Deal of the Year 2024', 'IFN Oman Deal of the Year 2024', and 'IFN Social Impact Deal of the Year 2024'. These honours underscore Bank Nizwa's unwavering dedication to people-centricity, financial ingenuity, and transformative impact in the Islamic finance sector.

Commenting on the wins, Khaled Al Kayed, Chief Executive Officer at Bank Nizwa, said, "These accolades are a testament to our relentless pursuit of excellence and our commitment to redefining Islamic finance as a driver of economic progress and social prosperity. At Bank Nizwa, we measure success not just by financial milestones but by the enduring value we create—whether in delivering exceptional banking solutions, expanding access to Sharia-compliant financial services, or advancing Oman's broader development agenda. Our commitment to responsible innovation, market leadership, and long-term value creation will continue to shape the future of Islamic finance, strengthening its role as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable growth."

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Malabar Gold & Diamonds to donate over 250,000 Iftar meals for Ramadan

**MUSCAT:** Reinforcing its dedication to social responsibility, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, has announced the community welfare activities the brand will be carrying out for the month of Ramadan.

These efforts will be carried out alongside the company's year-round ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) programs across its 13 global markets. Partnering with embassies, government bodies, NGOs, and like-minded organisations, Malabar Gold will extend essential food support to families and individuals in need throughout Ramadan, ensuring that the spirit of generosity reaches those who need it the most.

Over 250,000 Iftar meals will be distributed as part of this year's Ramadan food distribution drive across the UAE, KSA, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Malaysia, Singapore, the USA, the UK, Canada & Australia. In Oman, Iftar meals will be distributed amongst labourers in Muscat, Barka, Nizwa, Sohar & Salalah.

"The Hunger Free World project has been one of Malabar Group's most important initiatives since our inception in 1993. Spanning 85 locations globally, our efforts to eradicate hunger are further boosted during the holy month of Ramadan," commented M.P Ahammed, Chairman of Malabar Group. "Ramadan is a time of compassion, generosity, and reflection, making it the ideal occasion to strengthen our commitment to fighting hunger."

"Our Ramadan welfare programs are driven by the dedication and compassion of our entire team. From identifying areas in need to actively participating in food distribution, our employees are at the heart of this initiative. Their involvement highlights the strong culture of social responsibility that defines our organisation. We also extend our deepest gratitude to our valued customers, whose unwavering support allows us to continue these meaningful initiatives," said Abdul Salam K P, Vice Chairman of Malabar Group.

GAMING TOURNAMENT

## Alizz Islamic Bank launches 'Alizz GT'

**MUSCAT:** Alizz Islamic Bank recently announced the 'Alizz GT' gaming tournament that is being organised in collaboration with the Omani Gaming Committee for Games and Electronic Sports from the Ministry of Culture, Sports & Youth and will be held on March 6th to March 8.

Participants will compete on the EA Sports FC 25 game, culminating in the finals on March 8, where the grand winner will be awarded a cash prize of OMR2,000, the second place winner will receive OMR1,000 and the 3rd place winner will receive OMR 500. The event will serve as a valuable platform to highlight Alizz Islamic Bank's youth-focused financial solutions and initiatives that support their aspirations while fostering responsible financial habits.

It is worth mentioning that Alizz Islamic Bank offers 'Alizz Youth' value proposition specifically designed for the youth. This comprehensive program offers a wide range of attractive benefits and services designed to meet the unique needs of today's youth, while also encouraging them to adapt to the culture of saving to help them secure their future.

As per the latest data from statista.com; the gaming industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally among youth and adults and it is projected to grow from $310.97 billion in 2024 to $345.34 billion in 2025 at a compound annual growth rate of 11.1%; with the Omani Gaming Market projected to generate US$6.6m in revenue by the end of 2025 and the size of the Omani online gaming market expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 12.2% during the period 2021-2027 to reach 3.1 Million gamers. This presents a significant opportunity to engage with this demographic and tap into this growing sector.

Speaking about the tournament Ali Al Mani CEO of Alizz Islamic Bank, said: "As part of our 'Sport for All' Campaign, the idea of Alizz GT tournament was extended because we believe it plays a crucial role in modern sports and community building, fostering competition and teamwork at the same time. At Alizz Islamic Bank, we are always seeking innovative ways to engage with the interests and passions of our diverse customer segments to better understand and address their specific needs. We firmly believe in the importance of shaping a generation of responsible, confident and financially independent individuals. Also, we understand that the younger customers have unique behaviors, preferences and values that shape their banking expectations."

HONING EMPLOYEE SKILLS

# Bank Muscat celebrates EAGLEs programme success in training branch employees and unveils 2nd edition

**MUSCAT:** Bank Muscat, the leading financial service provider in the Sultanate of Oman and the winner of the Best Place to Work Award 2024, recently celebrated the graduation of the first batch of the EAGLEs programme, aimed at providing employees a unique platform to engage with the bank's leadership and hone their skills.

Launched last year, 70 employees from different branches covering all regions across the Sultanate, participated in various projects designed to help them gain new skills and experiences and use them wisely to enhance customer experience.

During the ceremony, the bank also announced the launch of the second edition of EAGLEs scheduled during the second quarter of 2025. To ensure ongoing development of employees, the new batch is specifically designed to allow more employees to develop their capabilities, improve their performance, enhance creativity and enable them to develop their leadership skills.

During his opening speech, Ahmed Faqir Al Bulushi, Deputy CEO – Banking, Bank Muscat, said: "The launch of EAGLEs program serves as a suitable platform for communication, fostering values of Engagement, Alignment, Growth, Learning and Evolvement. This program is designed to contribute in achieving the Bank's vision "To Serve You Better, Everyday" by fostering a strong institutional culture that supports the values of creativity and collaboration and encourages each one of us to pursue very high customer service standards in serving our valued customers. Investing in such programs is a key element for the success of any organization. They serve as effective platforms enabling participants to share ideas, embrace transparency and learn from one another. I would like to thank all participants for their contributions and wish them all the best in their careers."

Abdulnasir Al Raisi, General Manager – Personal Banking, Bank Muscat, said: "Supporting employees is one of the fundamental pillars that Bank Muscat is committed to upholding and providing an environment that fosters growth and development is a collective responsibility. Investing in training programmes not only enhances our individual opportunities but also contributes to building a strong and sustainable economy. Teamwork is a cornerstone upon which we build our vision and values. By sharing knowledge and ideas, we harness collective strength, empowering ourselves to overcome obstacles and achieve our common goals."

A number of participants in the first batch of EAGLEs expressed their happiness to join the programme. Manar Arif Al Balushi, from Treasury & Capital Market Department, said: "During the programme, all resources were available to support the learning journey of all participants. The topics we covered were both enriching and beneficial, for example, the design thinking workshop helped us enhance our perspectives based on our daily lives, enabling us to find solutions to overcome challenges through innovative thinking. I have participated in several training programmes at the Bank and EAGLEs played a significant role. There was substantial support and engaging discussions during the various workshops, along with ongoing follow-up to listen to employee feedback and work on improvements. These programs empower us to develop ourselves and those around us."

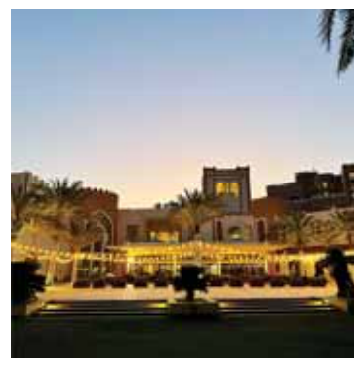
Salim Shames Al Hajri, from Bidiya Branch – North Sharqiya, said: "EAGLEs is a great initiative launched by the Management to reinforce values of participation, learning and development. This programme enabled us to explore topics like project management and understand the challenges we face. It also fostered a connection with management, providing insights into global banking and the bank's future vision. During the course of the programme, my perspective on customer service has changed as there is a growing importance of meeting customer needs. The Bank's training programs open new opportunities for employees, introducing concepts that support their growth and development within the organization."

On her part, Mahra Abdulrahman Al Zadjali, from Liwa Branch – North Batinah, added: "Participating in EAGLEs programme was transformative, helping us tackle challenges and generate new ideas. Managing a team taught me the importance of initiative. The programme fostered direct communication with the Bank's management, allowing us to share and refine our ideas. My experience in various training programmes introduced by the Bank has been enriching, helping us discover our strengths and motivating us to continually develop our careers."

ROUND-UP

# Celebrating 20 years with Ramadan to remember at Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah

This year, the iconic destination enhances its offerings with a curated selection of Iftar and Suhoor experiences designed to enchant every palate



**MUSCAT:** For two decades, Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah has been the heart of Ramadan celebrations in Muscat, where the breathtaking Hajar mountains meet the serene seashore. Marking 20 years of heartfelt hospitality this year, the resort continues to be a cherished gathering place, embracing the spirit of togetherness and tradition.

This year, the iconic destination enhances its offerings with a curated selection of Iftar and Suhoor experiences designed to enchant every palate. Guests can indulge in exquisite buffet spreads while Suhoor takes on a new level of sophistication at SiO2 Beach Lounge, set beneath the open sky for an unforgettable night by the sea.

"Ramadan at Shangri-La has always been a favourite among residents of Muscat with our diverse dining experiences. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary, we have gone above and beyond to elevate our offerings, introducing unique experiences such as the 'Iftar To Go' box and an exciting selection of gift hampers for both Ramadan and Eid," Philippe Kronberg, Resort General Manager of Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah and Shangri-La Al Husn, Muscat stated.

### Exquisite Iftar at Al Tanoor

The resort's signature restaurant, Al Tanoor located at Al Bandar, presents a rich array of Middle Eastern flavours alongside locally inspired specialties and international cuisines. Guests can enjoy cozy indoor seating or dine in the charming sablah area adorned with ambient lights. This sumptuous buffet is complemented by Arabic melodies, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. Iftar is served daily, from Maghrib time.

### Private Cabana Iftar

For a more intimate experience, guests can dine in a private cabana, accommodating up to six people. Perfect for family gatherings or small groups, each cabana provides a peaceful and personalized setting for Iftar with a selection of beverages..

### A serene Suhoor at SiO2 Beach Lounge

Following Iftar, guests can retreat by the shores of Al Bandar for asophisticated Suhoor experience at SiO2 Beach Lounge. Here, they can savour a collection of delectable appetisers, Ramadan beverages, coffee, tea and Huqqa accompanied bylive entertainment in a picturesque beachside setting. Open from 8pm to 2am.

### Ramadan or Eid Hamper

Perfect for gifting, the Ramadan or Eid hamper is the latest addition to this year's collection and is thoughtfully curated with premium delights. The pre-filled Ramadan Hamper features a selection of handpicked Ramadan favourites. For a more personalised touch, guests can create their own box and selecting between 4 to 10 items from our exclusive range. A meaningful way to celebrate the Holy Month and Eid with loved ones and colleagues.

### Iftar To Go – Enjoy at home

For those who prefer to break their fast in the comfort of their own home, Shangri-La's 'Iftar To Go' box offers a generous spread of traditional Arabic dishes, including mezze, soup, main courses, and desserts. The Iftar box is designed to serve up to six people and a choice of menu options from Mandi, lamb Shuwa or grills are available.

### Corporate gatherings

Ideal for corporate celebrations, team gatherings, or annual traditions, Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah offers an array of buffet and venue options to accommodate corporate events.

### Special Ramadan offer for Shangri-La Circle members

Shangri-La Circle members residing in Oman will enjoy a 20% discount on all Ramadan dining offerings, making this the perfect opportunity to indulge in exceptional cuisine throughout the Holy Month.

IFN AWARD

# Sohar International & Sohar Islamic win 'IPO Deal of the Year'

**MUSCAT:** Reaffirming its leadership in capital markets, Sohar International—Oman's best bank—along with its Islamic window, Sohar Islamic, has been honoured with the prestigious 'IPO Deal of the Year 2024' award at the Islamic Finance News (IFN) Awards.

The recognition highlights the bank's instrumental role in managing the region's largest initial public offering (IPO), which raised a record OMR 1.657 billion, and was oversubscribed nearly three times, as well as Sohar Islamic's contribution as one of the designated collecting banks. The award ceremony took place at Address Sky View, Dubai, with Fahad Al Zedjali, Executive Vice President & Head of Islamic Banking, and Dr. Al Mutasim Al Mutairi, Vice President & Head of Investment Islamic Banking, representing Sohar International. This accolade reinforces Sohar International's position as a market leader, recognized for its strategic expertise and excellence in executing complex capital market transactions. With a commitment to driving capital market growth, the bank continues to introduce comprehensive financial solutions that unlock new investment opportunities, support economic diversification, and contribute to Oman's long-term prosperity.

Commenting on this milestone, Abdulwahid Al Murshidi, Chief Executive Officer of Sohar International, stated, "Sohar International remains steadfast in its commitment to shaping Oman's financial landscape through the execution of transformative deals that elevate the nation's economic trajectory. The success of Oman's largest Initial Public Offering (IPO)—a landmark transaction that garnered significant investor confidence—underscores our expertise in structuring, managing, and delivering complex capital market solutions with precision and agility. Our role in this monumental transaction aligns with the national agenda of economic diversification, expanding investment opportunities, and unlocking avenues for sustained growth. This achievement is a testament to our ability to drive strategic initiatives that contribute to the broader pursuit of financial excellence and investor empowerment."

As the Issue Manager of Oman's largest-ever Initial Public Offering (IPO), Sohar International played a pivotal role in structuring and executing a transaction that raised a record OMR 780 million, setting a new benchmark for capital market excellence. This landmark IPO not only attracted overwhelming investor interest but also served as a catalyst for advancing Oman's regulatory framework, aligning capital market mechanisms with international best practices.

Spearheading the transaction, Sohar International demonstrated its unrivaled expertise in capital market advisory, investor outreach, and regulatory compliance, ensuring a seamless and transparent process. The bank's strategic approach facilitated broad-based participation from institutional and retail investors, fostering financial inclusion and driving capital inflow into Oman's economy. By leveraging its advanced digital banking capabilities, Sohar International streamlined the subscription process, making investment more accessible and efficient.

This achievement underscores Sohar International's leadership in managing complex capital market transactionsand its commitment to driving financial innovation and economic progress. By successfully delivering Oman's most significant IPO, the bank has reinforced its position as a trusted partner in the investment landscape.

RECOGNITION

# Zawawi Trading Company wins four prestigious EliteClass MENA Awards

**MUSCAT:** Zawawi Trading Company, the General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz Trucks in Oman, won 4 prestigious awards at The EliteClass 2024 Awards Ceremony held in February at the One&Only Royal Mirage in Dubai. The EliteClass 2024 Awards Ceremony marked the grand finale of a year-long EliteClass program across the Middle East and Africa, evaluating 24 categories spanning the full business spectrum of Mercedes-Benz Trucks, Daimler Buses, and Fuso Trucks & Bus.

Gary Brown, General Manager – Commercial Vehicles at Mercedes-Benz Oman, commented: "This achievement is a true reflection of our team's unwavering dedication, integrity, and commitment to delivering the highest service and customer satisfaction standards. At Zawawi Trading Company, we believe in innovation, transparency, and respect as the cornerstones of our success. We are incredibly proud of our team's accomplishments and will continue striving to set new benchmarks in the industry. The road to excellence never stops!"

Competing against 40 General Distributors from 59 countries, Zawawi's outstanding performance confirms its leading position in the automotive industry and highlights its unwavering commitment to excellence and customer-centric solutions.

Zawawi Trading Company received the "Gold Award for Facility" as a testament to the brand's world-class infrastructure and customer-focused service centers. In recognition of its innovative strategies in engaging and serving its customers, the company received the "Silver Award for Marketing". Highlighting the company's excellent marketing efforts, market expertise and dedication to delivering industry-leading transport solutions resulted in the "Silver Award for Truck Sales". Gold and silver awards were perfectly complemented by the "Bronze Award for Excellence Programme" acknowledging Zawawi's continuous drive for operational and service excellence.

These accolades reflect the company's ongoing pursuit of excellence in every facet of its operations, from cutting-edge facilities and customer engagement to unparalleled sales and service experiences. As Zawawi Trading Company continues its journey of growth and innovation, these awards serve as a powerful motivation to enhance its services further and reinforce its reputation as a trusted partner for Mercedes-Benz Trucks in Oman.

VISUAL STORYTELLING

# KR-Nikon concludes annual short-film contest

**MUSCAT:** The Khimji Ramdas (KR) Group and Nikon, in partnership with the Youth Centre, have successfully concluded this year's 'Manzarah Omaniya' short-film contest, with a spectacular closing ceremony at Cinepolis in Oman Avenues Mall. The initiative aims to empower Omani youth talents in visual storytelling, celebrating their creative abilities.

A brainchild of the KR Group, this year's competition saw eight finalists shortlisted across two categories - four in the Professional category and four in the Amateur category. The films were primarily shot in Sur, aligning with Oman's 2025 tourism focus on the coastal city. To further immerse participants in Sur's rich cultural and historical heritage, the finalists engaged in an exclusive videowalk, capturing the city's iconic landmarks and scenic attractions.

During the closing ceremony, all winning films were showcased, highlighting the exceptional creativity and technical expertise of the participants. The winners were honored with Nikon cameras, reinforcing the competition's commitment to equipping emerging filmmakers with industry-leading tools to advance their craft.

Speaking at the event, Varun Khimji, Director, Khimji Ramdas stated: "An initiative by Khimji Ramdas, 'Manzarah Omaniya' is designed to nurture and celebrate Omani talent in visual storytelling. More than just a competition, it reflects our commitment to empowering local creators by providing them with a platform to express their perspectives, capture the essence of our heritage, and elevate Oman's presence in the regional and global creative landscape."

An annual contest, 'Manzarah Omaniya' merges the brilliance of Oman's rich heritage with Nikon's cutting-edge imaging technology and the vibrant creativity of Omani youth. With Sur as Oman's official Tourism Destination for 2025, the contest provided participants with a unique opportunity to capture the soul of this coastal gem in their distinctive style.

Whether an amateur or professional, a vlogger or an aspiring filmmaker, the competition serves as a launch-pad for creative talents to showcase their skills, connect with like-minded individuals, and gain national recognition for their work. As the contest continues to grow, it remains committed to fostering Oman's creative community and elevating the standards of visual storytelling in the region and beyond.

mazda

MADE IN JAPAN

# WIN BIG THIS RAMADAN

WIN A MAZDA EVERY WEEK

## Raffle

4 WEEKS, 4 MAZDA 6

## BUY NOW

INCREASE YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

RAFFLE DATES | 16TH, 23RD MARCH & 6TH, 17TH APRIL 2025

MAZDA 6
2.0L/2.5L
STARTING PRICE
RO 7,966

MAZDA CX-60
2.5L/3.3L TURBO MHEV
STARTING PRICE
RO 12,999

MAZDA CX-90
3.3L TURBO MHEV
STARTING PRICE
RO 15,999

MAZDA CX-5
2.5L
STARTING PRICE
RO 8,955

## *FREE 4 YEARS UNLIMITED KMS SERVICE

#AAA ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE FOR 3 YEARS

92888005
www.mazdaoman.com

Towell Auto Centre LLC
YOUR TRUSTED PARTNER

SCAN TO CHAT

SCAN TO KNOW MORE

Visit the showroom and view it to believe it.

• Al Hail • Wattayah • Barka • Sohar • Nizwa • Sur • Salalah

The offer is valid on all models from 24th February to 15th April, 2025. The prices mentioned are for base mode variants of CX-60 2.5L, Mazda 6 2L and base model variants of all other models & VAT extra. *Free service is Iinjaz service package and applicable to all variants of MY 2024 Mazda6 2.5, CX-5, CX-60 & CX-90. #AAA roadside assistance is valid for the first 3 years from the date of retail purchase. Raffle draw is applicable for all customers purchase any Mazda model during this offer period from any of the authorized Mazda showrooms after completing the invoicing and registration formalities. Total of 4 raffle draws will be held and each winner will receive a Mazda 6 2.0L as the raffle gift. 1st Raffle on 16th March 2025, 2nd raffle on 23rd March 2025, 3rd raffle on 6th April 2025 and 4th raffle on 17th April 2025. The vehicles shown are for illustrative purposes only and specifications are subject to change without notice. Offer valid only for private vehicles and not applicable to fleet, Ministry, taxi, rental, or commercial car purchases.

# Unbeatable Offers For Memorable Gatherings!

إضغط هنا لتصفح العروض الكاملة
Click Here To Check The Full Offers

## SAMSUNG Galaxy S23 FE

• هاتف ذكي
من سامسونج

256GB 8GB RAM

WAS قبل 271.000
SAVE وفّر 101.100
DISCOUNT خصم 37.3%
169.900 OMR ر.ع
Pay Only إدفع فقط

## Hisense

• شاشة أل إي دي 58 بوصة
من هايسنس أل 4 كيه ذكية

الضريبة علينا

+

WAS قبل 149.900
SAVE وفّر 40.000
DISCOUNT خصم 26.6%
109.900 OMR ر.ع

**58A61N**
- 58 Inch 4K UHD Smart LED TV
- 2560x1080 Resolution
- 3 HDMI, 2 USB, Vidaa OS
- 10W Speaker Output
- 2.0 Channels, Black

## Lenovo

• كمبيوتر محمول
من لينوفو

AMD RYZEN 7000 SERIES 7 — DOLBY AUDIO — IPS — A Backlit Keyboard — FINGERPRINT READER — Thin & Light

NEW ARRIVAL

Windows 11

Dicota Carry Case
+
Dicota Wireless Mouse
Worth OMR 15

**IdeaPad Flex 5**
- AMD Ryzen 7 7730U, 8 cores
- 16GB RAM
- 512GB SSD
- 14 Inch FHD IPS Touch
- AMD Radeon Graphics
- FHD 1080p Camera

Exclusive only at اكسترا extra حصرياً في

WAS قبل 299.900
274.900 OMR ر.ع
Pay Only إدفع فقط

## DēLonghi

• ماكينة تحضير القهوة
من ديلونجي

**ECAM290.81TB**
- Coffee Machine MAGNIFICA EVO
- Fully Automatic
- 9+ Functions, Ideal for Espresso
- Americano, Cappuccino, Latte
- Macchiato & Many More Coffee Recipes

WAS قبل 365.000
SAVE وفّر 76.000
DISCOUNT خصم 20.8%
289.000 OMR ر.ع
Pay Only إدفع فقط

## LG Life's Good

• ثلاجة
من أل جي

234 Ltr

الضريبة علينا

+

WAS قبل 157.400
SAVE وفّر 37.500
DISCOUNT خصم 23.8%
119.900 OMR ر.ع

**GR-C342SLBB**
- Double Door Refrigerator
- 234 Litre Net Capacity

## Tefal

• قدر ضغط
من تيفال

Upto 2X time faster — Upto 80% of vitamin prevention

8 Ltr

**TFP3534446**
- Pressure Cooker
- Instant lock
- Stainless Steel
- 2 Cooking Programs

WAS قبل 44.900
SAVE وفّر 20.000
DISCOUNT خصم 44.5%
24.900 OMR ر.ع
Pay Only إدفع فقط

Valid From 13 February Till 9 March 2025

ساري من 13 فبراير إلى 9 مارس 2025

اكسترا extra

BUY FROM 3 SHOWROOMS OR BUY ONLINE extra.com

Al Tanoor

شانغريلا بر الجصة، مسقط
SHANGRI-LA
BARR AL JISSAH
MUSCAT

# EARLY BIRD OFFER
# *Iftar Buffet*

**BUY 3, PAY FOR 2**
Valid for the first 10 days of Ramadan only

Book early to unlock special savings and indulge in an exquisite Iftar at Al Tanoor

Buy 3 Iftar buffets and get the 3rd one free
Offer available exclusively for the first 10 days of Ramadan

**OMR 29 net per person**
Offer is not combinable with other discounts or loyalty programs

Al Tanoor | From Maghrib time until 10:30pm

24776565 79269247