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PRAYER TIMINGS

DHUHR	12:20PM
ASR	03:45PM
MAGHRIB	06:22PM
ISHA	07:39PM
FAJR (TOMORROW)	04:56AM



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TOP THREE INSIDE STORIES

OMAN New banking laws to meet digital needs

1 The Royal Decrees related to the formation of a new board of Central Bank of Oman and appointment of its governor are aimed at boosting the legal and regulatory framework for meeting the modern financial system requirements. The Sultanate's banking sector has seen remarkable developments during the past two decades. **>A3**

SPORTS NZ secure 5-wicket win over Pakistan

2 Fine knocks by openers Tim Seifert and Finn Allen and solid bowling spells from pacers helped New Zealand secure a five-wicket win over Pakistan in the second T20I of the five-match series at Dunedin on Tuesday. **>A8**

MARKET Plan to establish food, fisheries complex

3 The SEZAD has completed the first phase of a detailed plan to establish a fisheries and food industries complex in the zone. The plan forms part of SEZAD efforts to encourage investment in the sector. **>B1**

NEW INITIATIVES

Plan to create 45,000 new jobs in Oman this year: Labour minister

Times News Service

MUSCAT: A total of 45,000 job opportunities will be created in the Sultanate of Oman, announced the Minister of Labour during its annual conference in Muscat.

The plan includes 11,000 training and qualification opportunities for job seekers, approximately 10,000 jobs within the government sector, and 24,000 jobs in the private sector.

Dr. Mahad bin Said bin Ali Ba'Owain, Minister of Labour, emphasised the ministry's commitment to training programmes linked to employment, on-the-job training, and wage support.

These initiatives will be un-



dertaken through various channels, including support for small and medium enterprises holding Riyada cards, large companies, start-ups, freelance work, and temporary contracts within government companies for replacement purposes. The ministry is

actively monitoring companies participating in the training-linked-employment programme, with a compliance rate exceeding 82 percent. The minister also stated that 36,615 individuals were employed in 2024, surpassing the initial target of 35,000 jobs.

Furthermore, the number of active beneficiaries of the job security benefit reached 17,215 by the end of 2024, including 11,758 males. As part of ongoing efforts to improve government performance, the "Individual Excellence" system has been implemented in 67 government entities, including the introduction of 45 new features to enhance the work experience and individual and institutional evaluation. **>A5**

CONSUMER AWARENESS SEES SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN OMAN

This reflects a positive development in the relationship between consumers and markets in the Sultanate of Oman

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Consumer Empowerment Index regarding rights and responsibilities for the year 2024 reached approximately 78%, marking a significant increase compared to the year 2022, Oman's Consumer Protection Authority (CPA) said on Tuesday.

"This reflects a positive development in the relationship between consumers and markets in Oman and is a result of the intensive efforts made by the Consumer Protection Authority to enhance transparency and ensure consumer rights," added the CPA.

Furthermore, the development of this index contributes to achieving the priorities of Oman Vision 2040, particularly in the governance and institutional performance axis. It does so by utilising the index results to attain effective institutional performance and provide high-quality government services.



The study was based on the opinion poll about 'Consumer Empowerment Index on Rights and Duties in the Sultanate of Oman' and was conducted by the Market Studies and Research Department of the Authority in 2024.

"The study aimed to enhance consumers' ability to transition from being aware consumers to empowered consumers who are fully aware of their rights and duties. This was achieved by identifying the level of consumer awareness of their rights and duties in Oman, revealing consumer practices, and measuring their level of engagement and partici-

pation in their experiences with society," the authority said. The survey contributed to providing a deeper understanding of consumer behaviours and empowerment, which helps in developing policies and programmes that better meet their needs.

The consumer empowerment index used in the study was based on three key indicators.

The first indicator focused on awareness of consumer rights legislation, measuring the level of knowledge related to contractual conditions and commercial practices, as well as ensuring consumers' entitlements, including rights of return and exchange. **>A5**

FRESH WAVE OF ATTACKS



Gaza death toll tops 400 amid surge in Israeli bombings in Gaza Strip

GAZA: Medical sources announced on Tuesday that the death toll from Israeli occupation forces' aerial attacks on different areas across the Gaza Strip has surged to 404 Palestinian civilians.

They emphasised that the ongoing bombardment has resulted in at least 404 fatalities, including women and children. Additionally, numerous people remain trapped under the rubble of targeted buildings.

Meanwhile, a total of 562 Palestinian civilians were reported

injured as a result of a series of airstrikes carried out by the Israeli warplanes.

Israeli occupation forces launched a fresh wave of aerial attacks on the Gaza Strip after midnight, resuming the ongoing genocide after a two-month hiatus.

The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the resumption of the genocidal war on Gaza, which had ceased for two months following the fragile ceasefire agreement. **-WAPA**

BRUISE DETECTION

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The 'Banana fruit bruise detection using fractal dimension based image processing' is among the winning innovative research projects at the 11th National Research Award organised by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation.

Dr. Mai Khalfan Salim Al Dairi, Research Assistant at Sultan Qaboos University, won in the Information and Communication Technologies field in the Young Researcher's category.

Discussing her research project, Dr. Mai Al Dairi stated that bananas are susceptible to mechanical damage due to bruising caused by improper handling and it gets spoiled due to improper storage conditions. The research team applied a simulated drop impact test and evaluated the mechanical damage magnitude by fractal dimension using a machine vision system to characterise the bruise intensity and quality of bananas as affected by different impact energies and storage temperatures.

Dr. Mai Al Dairi said that to eval-



DR. MAI KHALFAN SALIM AL DAIRI, Research Assistant at Sultan Qaboos University

uate the bruise area, the fractal dimension, browning index, grayscale value, and total colour difference were determined after 48 hours of impact by image processing.

Besides, conventional analyses of bruise area, bruise size, and bruising susceptibility were also performed. The effect of drop heights, ball weights, and storage temperatures on the main quality parameters (weight, firmness,

colour, sugar content, and acidity) was studied.

According to Dr. Mai Al Dairi, the results indicated that fractal dimension analysis provides high accuracy in describing bruises in bananas, opening up new avenues for improving quality control during transportation and storage.

The study identified a quality problem, showing that storing damaged bananas at improper temperatures can worsen the situation, leading to weight loss, reduced firmness, and significant changes in sugar and acidity, ultimately making the fruit less appealing to consumers.

Through this study, Dr. Mai Al Dairi recommended using modern technologies such as applying fractal analysis to accurately assess the size of bruises and the severity of damage and utilising machine vision technologies to improve banana quality control throughout the supply chain; and choosing appropriate storage temperatures such as storing bananas at optimal temperatures that limit the aggravation of damage and maintain their nutritional and visual quality.

She maintained that these efforts contribute to providing a better product to consumers and reducing economic losses for farmers and traders.

This research project was published in the journal Food Chemistry with an impact factor of 8.5. The research team consisted of Dr. Mai Al Dairi, Dr. Pankaj B. Pathare, Prof. Rashid Abdullah Al Yahyai, Dr. Hemanatha Jayasuriya, and Dr. Zahir Humaid Al Attabi.

Regarding her win, Dr. Mai Al Dairi stated that "Winning the National Research Award has been a profound recognition of my dedication to addressing one of the real-world challenges through research.

"It symbolises not only personal achievement but also the impact of myself and our Postharvest and Value Addition Research Team work on advancing knowledge and contributing to sustainable agricultural practices. This award also serves as a motivation to further my commitment to meaningful research that benefits both local and global communities, inspiring others to pursue excellence in their fields."

CONSUMER PROTECTION AUTHORITY

CPA Chairman meets with the Governor of North Al Batinah

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Salim Ali Al Hakmani, Chairman of the Consumer Protection Authority (CPA), visited North Al Batinah Governorate on Tuesday and met with Mohammed Suleiman Al Kindi, Governor of North Al Batinah.

The meeting included discussions on several topics related to

consumer protection and the efforts exerted across various aspects of the Authority's work.

This visit is part of the ongoing series of field visits to the governorates, aimed at monitoring work progress, reviewing the efforts made by the Authority's staff, and assessing the situation on the ground.

During the meeting, the Direc-

torate of Consumer Protection in North Al Batinah gave a visual presentation outlining its efforts throughout 2024.

The presentation covered several key areas, including development and improvement, regulatory and awareness roles, community initiatives, various inspection and awareness campaigns, and partnerships with both

the public and private sectors.

Oman Vision 2040

Additionally, the presentation addressed the plans and objectives aligned with Oman Vision 2040 and its targets, in line with the work strategies for North Al Batinah Governorate.

The presentation also provided an overview of statistics and indi-

cators related to prices, the number of violations, reports, complaints, and seizures, among other market-related data in North Al Batinah Governorate.

Furthermore, it highlighted the efforts undertaken to monitor commercial activities and oversee markets in collaboration with the relevant authorities.

Additionally, discussions were

held on the Directorate's plan for 2025 and its objectives within the general framework of the Authority's strategic plan.

The presentation also covered the electronic linkage mechanisms between the Authority and the offices of the esteemed governors to facilitate access to statistical information and indicators related to the Authority's work.



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INSPECTION TEAM

Consumer Protection Authority organises joint campaign at Central Wholesale Fish Market

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The joint inspection team from the Consumer Protection Authority and the Ministry of Agricultural, Fisheries, and Water Resources visited the Central Wholesale Fish Market on Tuesday.

The visit aimed to continuously ensure the availability of goods in the market, their prices, and their suitability for consumers.

Monitoring violations

It also aimed to verify suppliers' compliance with regulations and laws and to monitor any violations if found.

This visit comes as part of a series of joint visits conducted by the Authority in cooperation with various government entities, aiming to strengthen and support the field efforts dedicated to market and commercial center inspections across the Sultanate of Oman.

It also seeks to closely observe market conditions, enhance and improve the quality of services provided to consumers by suppliers, and review the efforts made in monitoring and controlling markets.

IBE Name: Alizz Islamic Bank S.A.O.C
Minimum Disclosure Requirements in the year-end Financial statements



		FORM NO CBO / MDR / 3	
		RO 000'	
Details	Note	Current Year	Previous Year
1 - Net Income from Islamic Financing (a-b)			
(a) Profit from Islamic Financing		63,589	56,311
Less: (b) Expenses of Islamic financing		-	-
2 - Net Income from Sukuk and Interbank (a-b)			
(a) Profit from Sukuk & Interbank		6,072	4,883
Less: (b) Expenses of Sukuk & Interbank		(1,129)	(1,615)
3 - Return on unrestricted investment accounts (a-b)			
(a) Gross Return on Unrestricted Investment Accounts		(4,282)	(4,552)
Less: (b) Bank Share as Mudarib		1,341	415
4 - Return on wakala deposits		(38,016)	(29,518)
5 - Dividend income		147	61
6 - Net Fee & commissions income (a-b)			
a) Fee & commissions income		5,508	5,296
Less: b) Fee & commissions expenses		(887)	(716)
7 - Net Foreign Exchange income (a-b)			
a) Income		1,120	696
Less : b) expense		-	-
8 - Unrealized gain (loss) on equity type instrument carried at fair value through statement of income		-	-
9 - Gain (loss) on equity type instrument carried at fair value through equity		-	-
10 - Net income from other investment			
a) Income from other Investments		-	-
Less: b) Expense		-	-
11 - Income From Subsidiaries	7	-	-
a)		-	-
b)		-	-
12 - Income From Associate companies	7	-	-
a)		-	-
b)		-	-
13 - Income from other licensed activities			
a)		-	-
b)		-	-
14 - Other Income			
a)		1,707	-
b)		-	-
c)		-	-
Total Operating Income		35,170	31,262
Staff Expenses		(13,651)	(12,438)
General & Administrative expenses	12	(3,379)	(3,932)
Depreciation and Amortization expenses		(2,421)	(1,806)
Other expenses			
a)		-	-
b)		-	-
c)		-	-
d)		-	-
e)		-	-
f)		-	-
Total Operating Expense		(19,451)	(18,176)
Net operating Income / Loss (Income / Loss on ordinary activities before ECL)		15,719	13,086
ECL written off		-	-
ECL written back		-	-
Cash Recoveries		-	-
Expected Credit Losses charged			
a) ECL against Financing		(4,009)	(3,971)
b) ECL against Placements		15	(18)
c) ECL against Investments		(17)	(19)
d) ECL against Other Assets		-	-
e) Others		6	32
Net Expected Credit Losses charged during the period		(4,005)	(3,976)
Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax		11,714	9,109
Income tax		(1,703)	(1,308)
Net profit/(Loss) for the period		10,011	7,802
Other Comprehensive Income for the year			
- Movement in fair value of available for sale/FVOCI investment for the year		(234)	173
- Effect of currency translation for the year		-	-
- Any other comprehensive income for the year (please specify)		-	-
Total Comprehensive Income for the year		9,777	7,975

Assets as of 31 December, 2024	FORM NO CBO / MDR / 5	
	RO 000'	
Assets	Current Year	Previous Year
1 - Cash	6,018	5,765
2 - Balances with Central Bank of Oman	56,062	60,631
3 - Capital Deposit with Central Bank	525	500
4 - Cash and Balances with Other Banks & Financial Institutions	3,270	2,606
5 - Due from H.O, Branches, Principal shareholders & Affiliates abroad	-	-
6 - Due from Financial Institutions (Placements)	13,475	18,850
7 - Total Islamic Financing	1,079,758	975,223
Receivables under Murabaha, Salam & Istisna	137,286	115,837
Ijarah Financing	136,030	152,209
Musharaka & Diminishing Musharaka	626,422	518,818
Wakala Bil Istithmar	177,160	185,466
Other Financing	2,860	2,893
8 - Investments	121,901	72,917
9 - Investment in Properties	-	-
10 - Fixed Assets and Intangibles	5,332	3,599
11 - Other Assets	30,976	28,075
Total Assets	1,317,317	1,168,166

Liabilities as of 31 December, 2024	FORM NO CBO / MDR / 5	
	RO 000'	
Liabilities	Current Year	Previous Year
1 - Current and margin accounts	119,799	131,944
2 - Due to H.O , Branches, Principal shareholders & affiliates abroad	-	-
3 - Due to Financial Institutions	-	-
4 - Other liabilities	25,773	20,049
Wakala Based Deposits	-	-
Unrestricted investment accounts	Current Year	Previous Year
1 - Investment accounts	1,013,050	897,254
2 - Profit Equalization Reserve	-	-
3 - Investment Risk Reserve	-	-
Shareholders' Equity	Current Year	Previous Year
1 - Share Capital * / Assigned Capital #	141,307	139,500
2 - Legal Reserve * / Deposit with CBO #	1,781	2,334
3 - Share premium	-	-
4 - Investment Fair Value Reserve	(398)	(191)
5 - Other Reserves	-	-
6 - Retained Earnings	16,005	(22,725)
Total Liabilities, Unrestricted investment account & shareholders equity	1,317,317	1,168,166
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New banking laws to help meet digital needs

Oman's banking sector has seen remarkable changes during the past two decades which required comprehensive revision of the legislative systems

Times New Service

MUSCAT: The Royal Decrees related to the formation of a new board of Central Bank of Oman and appointment of its governor are aimed at boosting the legal and regulatory framework for meeting the modern financial system requirements.

The Sultanate's banking sector has seen remarkable developments during the past two decades which required comprehensive revision of the legislative systems to keep abreast with the rapid changes in the banking and financial businesses to allow utilisation of the digital innovation and technology for financial and banking services.

These developments are reflected in the new banking law in the form of regulation of the banking work and the CBO in two regulations; the first related to the CBO governance as one of the



units of the administrative apparatus of the state and the second related to the regulation of the banking work and the financial and non-banking activities.

The banking law consists of 241 articles rephrased in accordance with the state-of-the-art legislative methods, which rely on the clarity of the legal text to make easy for the specialised persons and the public understand the texts and their implementation.

Monetary policy

Chapter 1 of the new banking law deals with the definitions and the general rules/provisions while chapter 2 deals with the responsibilities and the work mechanisms of the CBO including the monetary policy and cash management. Chapter 3 dealt with regulating issuance of the national currency by the CBO.

The other chapters of the law tackles the provisions encouraging attraction of local and foreign investments in the banking sector and regulation of the Islamic banking business. They also handle new concepts such as the digital banks and financial technol-

ogy and other financial services established.

The law stresses the significance of protection of the rights of customers and consumers of financial services in the banking sector and other financial activities.

The CBO system issued by Royal Decree No. 3/2025 regulates the CBO work and governance by article (21) which formed the legal framework for regulating the same.

The provisions of the CBO system also aims to achieve cash stability and t ensure the safety of the banks and financial institutions along with boosting the role of the CBO in achieving Oman vision for sustainable economic development.

The provisions also deals with the CBO prerogatives such as issuance of the national currency, preserving the value of the currency, setting the cash policies, supervising on the licensed financial and banking activities.

The law on protection of the banking deposits was issued prior to the above law and system by Royal Decree No. 47/2024.

AL BURAIMI HOSPITAL

Agreement signed for the purchase of medical equipment

AL BURAIMI: The Directorate General of Health Services in Al Buraimi Governorate today signed an agreement with Ooredoo to finance the purchase of modern medical equipment for Al Buraimi Hospital and Al Buraimi Health Complex.

Laser device

According to the agreement, the General Surgery Department at Al Buraimi Hospital will be supplied with an advanced surgical laser device for the treatment of some gastrointestinal diseases.

The agreement also deals with

the procurement of a shockwave therapy device for Al Buraimi Health Complex as part of efforts to enhance the quality of health services in the facility.

The medical equipment procurement project is a key initiative to support the governorate's health sector.

Surgical procedures

It contributes to improving the efficiency of treatment and surgical procedures, reducing waiting times, and enhancing the healthcare environment, thereby enhancing the quality of services provided to patients. -ONA



PROCUREMENT: The medical equipment procurement project is a key initiative to support the governorate's health sector. - ONA

NOTICE

The Authority for Public Services Regulation, (The Authority) in exercise of the powers conferred upon it by Article (109) of the Law for the Regulation and Privatisation of the Electricity and Related Water Sector promulgated Royal Decree (No.78/2004) (the Sector Law), proposes a modifications to some of the conditions of the Licence granted to Sohar Power Company SAOG («the Licensee») as follows:

This Licence Modification authorises the Licensee to undertake the Generation of electricity at the Production Facilities up with a maximum Production Capacity of 405 MW (at reference site conditions) and to be procured by Oman Power and Water Procurement Company S.A.O.C (OPWP). The Generation Licence shall be effective from 01 April 2025 and remains in force and effect for a period of nine (9) years as the date of its granted unless revoked in accordance with the provisions of the Licence or the Sector Law.

The intended Licence modification will be made upon the licensee request be in order to carry out the Generation of Electricity with a maximum capacity of production of electricity currently authorized by the Licence. By approving this modification, the licensee will be authorized for producing the electricity generation capacity from its existing Production Facilities as provided in its Licence.

Any person who has any objection to the grant of the Proposed Licence modification shall submit details of their objection to the Authority within 28 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

Any objection submitted after the period stipulated in this Notice will not be considered.

Objections shall be submitted to the following address:

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“And if the debtor is on straitened circumstances, then grant him time until it is easy for him to repay” (Surah al-Baqarah:280)

Ramadan is an opportunity to bless your debtors with the forgiveness of that which they owe you if it is financially viable. Your reward is with Allah, and he is ever just and generous. It is our responsibility to honour our commitments and pay our debts, but there is a great reward for those who, as an act of worship to Allah, forgive those who are in their debt.

We can relieve another’s debt in two ways. If we have given money as a loan to someone and we know that he is genuinely not able to repay we should give them time. Another way is to forgive it completely. According to Surah al-Baqarah:281, “But if you remit it [the debt] by way of charity, that is better for you if you did but know. And be afraid of the Day when you shall be brought back to Allah. Then every person shall be paid what he earned, and they shall not be dealt with unjustly”

You can also help the one in debt by helping them pay off their debts. It is important to care for people and try to alleviate their stresses and strains, whether financial or otherwise.

THE SATISFYING

PAYA SOUP

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Tbsp oil
- 8 pepper corns
- 3 cloves
- 2 cinnamon
- 2 medium sliced onion
- 1 tbsp ginger garlic paste
- 1 Tbsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 medium-size tomato, finely chopped
- 6 pieces goat trotters, thoroughly washed with hot water until absolutely clean
- Salt, to taste

- 6 cups water
- 1/2 cup fresh coriander leaves , finely chopped

METHODS

1. In a pressure cooker over medium-high heat, heat the vegetable oil.
2. Add the peppercorns, cloves, and cinnamon stick. Cook until the spices begin to crackle.
3. Add the onion and ginger garlic paste. Sauté for 2 minutes.
4. Add the coriander, turmeric, and cumin. Sauté for 1 minute more.
5. Add the tomato and trotters. Season to taste with salt and sauté until the



- spices have coated the trotters well.
6. Add the water and reduce the heat. Lock the lid in place and cook the soup in a pressure cooker for about 30 mins or 4 whistles .
 7. Let the pressure release and remove the lid.
 8. Mix well and garnish with fresh coriander .

CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOURS

Consumer skills index improves

<FROM A1 The objective of this indicator was to assess the consumer's ability to engage in consumption behaviours that comply with the Consumer Protection Law in the Sultanate of Oman.

The second indicator focused on consumer skills, measuring the ability of consumers to compare prices and products across stores and outlets, read and interpret brands and product specifications, distinguish between counterfeit and original goods, and identify misleading advertisements and promotional offers.

The aim was to enable consumers to make informed purchasing decisions based on their interaction with the available information.

The third indicator focused on consumer engagement with others, measuring consumers' responses when facing a problem, the reporting mechanisms they use by sharing their experiences regarding commercial practices with others, and their benefit from awareness campaigns.

Additionally, it assessed how

consumers handle damage claims and compensation, aiming to evaluate their level of engagement with society and their ability to address the challenges they encounter.

When comparing the results of the Consumer Empowerment Index on Rights and Duties between 2022 and 2024, the survey results indicated that the index rose from 72% to 77.6%, reflecting a positive development in consumers' awareness of their rights and their ability to make informed decisions.

The legislative and regulatory awareness index also improved from 75% to 81.3%, demonstrating a notable increase in consumer knowledge of the laws that protect their rights and regulate their commercial transactions.

Additionally, the consumer skills index improved from 72% to 78.1%, indicating a significant development in consumers' ability to compare prices, evaluate products and services, and consequently make well-informed purchasing decisions.

Furthermore, the consumer participation and engagement index increased from 68% to 72.1%, confirming consumers' ability to share their commercial experiences with others and reflecting the extent of their benefit from the awareness campaigns provided by the Authority.

It is worth noting that the main factors contributing to this increase included enhanced market monitoring, the development of mechanisms to maintain stable commercial relationships between traders and consumers, as well as the awareness initiatives and campaigns launched by the Authority, which played a pivotal role in empowering consumers to make informed purchasing decisions.

“This improvement in consumer empowerment indicators reflects a positive transformation in the economic landscape, as consumers have become more capable of influencing markets, thereby contributing to the stability of the national economy and supporting sustainable growth.

EMPLOYMENT

Advanced digital tools launched

<FROM A1 The government departments will be assessed based on operational speed, leadership quality, and job satisfaction, enhancing the efficiency of government work and raising overall performance standards.

During the conference, the minister addressed the efforts of the National Employment Programme, which aims to integrate educational outcomes with labour market needs.

This will be achieved by analys-

ing and diagnosing the employment system and providing innovative solutions to enhance its efficiency and bridge the existing gaps.

The programme has contributed to the localisation of 2,800 leadership and mid-level positions in industrial estates, in collaboration with the Public Establishment for Industrial Estates (Madayn).

Additionally, the programme has launched several advanced digital tools to improve labour

market efficiency, including the “Tawteen” platform for managing employment in economic sectors, the “Marsad” platform for analysing labour market data, and the “Khuta” platform for assisting Omani youth in making sustainable career decisions.

The minister emphasised that employment governance committees, established in 17 key economic sectors, are working to achieve localisation goals and enhance employment opportunities for Omanis.

**Ramadan Iftar Program**



The Prophet (ﷺ) said "Whoever breaks the fast for a fasting person, will have a reward similar to his reward, however, nothing is detracted from the reward of a fasting person" .

The Oman Charitable Organization is pleased to announce that it will receive donations for Ramadan Iftar Program in Sultanate of Oman for the year 1446 AH AD 2025

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100 days after Assad’s fall, Syria still mired in serious challenges

While some Syrians still hope for stability, others fear the country is slipping into deeper turmoil

DAMASCUS: A hundred days after the fall of the Bashar al-Assad government, Syria is still grappling with political uncertainty, economic hardships and growing security concerns, making the path forward increasingly uncertain.

Syrian interim leader Ahmed al-Sharaa has sought political reforms and regional diplomatic engagement, while foreign affairs chief Asaad al-Shaibani has been flying from one capital to another, seeking support for the interim authorities and advocating for the removal of crippling Western sanctions, which he identifies as major obstacles to Syria’s reconstruction and economic recovery.

Such sanctions are still largely in place, continuing to weigh on the already dire economic conditions on the ground. In addition, episodes of sectarian violence have also been darkening the prospect.

Security concerns

Syria’s former security and military institutions have been dissolved, creating a security vacuum that the interim authorities are striving to fill. In many areas, lawlessness is more commonplace than ever.

Atif Hussein, a 57-year-old retired government worker, said the decision to dismantle the army and police has led to severe consequences. “People now resolve disputes with weapons, not the law,” he said.

On top of that, the uncontrolled



spread of arms has exacerbated the crisis. Hatim Abdelhadi, a 43-year-old from Sweida province, said that armed groups now roam freely in certain areas.

Political experts agree that lawlessness remains a top concern. Ali Yousef, a Syrian analyst, described the situation as one of “uncertainty and fear.” He highlighted the increasing reports of theft and violence, with no clear security structure to address them.

Economic hardships

Although commodity prices have technically fallen, many Syrians cannot afford even necessities due to a lack of liquidity and widespread unemployment.

Some observers say the interim

authorities’ decision to withhold cash liquidity from banks to prevent mass withdrawals has further aggravated the situation, forcing citizens to sell off their U.S. dollar savings below market value.

Mass layoffs have worsened the crisis, as the interim authorities opted to sack thousands of state employees, citing the lack of competence.

“The widespread firings have left families without income,” said Assef Ibrahim, a former government employee.

Political analyst Basil Hanawi criticised the current economic approach, warning that it has “failed to relaunch the economy,” resulting in factory closures and business stagnation.

Sectarian tension

The recent deadly violence in Latakia and Tartous provinces has heightened sectarian fears, especially in Alawite-majority areas, where reports of killings and retaliatory attacks abound.

The violence erupted on March 6, triggered by “coordinated attacks” by armed groups loyal to Assad on security forces in the coastal Latakia province, according to Syria’s defense authorities.

The violence quickly escalated into broader sectarian clashes, predominantly targeting Alawite-majority towns and villages, UN Human Rights Spokesperson Thameen Al-Kheetan has said lately.

He added that initial investigations suggest that perpetrators included fighters aligned with Syria’s interim authorities as well as pro-Assad factions.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights has documented at least 1,500 civilian deaths so far.

Syrian analyst Yousef warned that sectarian divisions could deepen if interim authorities fail to act swiftly. “What happened on the coast is a warning sign. The interim authorities must work to prevent further escalation or risk long-term instability,” he said. — **Xinhua**



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EUROPEAN UNION



India, EU discuss bilateral relations

NEW DELHI: Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (West) Tanmaya Lal held a meeting with European Parliament Chair of the Delegation for Relations with India, Angelika Niebler and discussed India-EU bilateral ties, parliamentary exchanges and global issues.

In a post on X, the Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal stated, “Secretary (West) Mr. Tanmaya Lal met with @ANiebler Ms. Angelika Niebler, European Parliament Chair of the Delegation for Relations with India. They discussed India-EU bilateral ties, parliamentary exchanges, and global issues.”

Earlier on Monday, former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt said that 2025 will be a “breakthrough year” in the relationship between India and the European Union.

Speaking with ANI, Bildt stated that both sides are committed to reaching an agreement by the end of the year.

“I think that we will have a breakthrough this year in the re-

lationship between the European Union and India. There’s a commitment now on both the Indian and the EU sides to have sort of an agreement concluded by the end of the year,” Bildt said.

“It’s got to be difficult. It’s got to require compromise both from the European side and Indian side, but in the rather uncertain environment that we have for global trade with tariffs...I think that would be very important,” he added.

During EU President Ursula von der Leyen’s visit to India in February, both parties directed their teams to conclude Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations by the end of the year.

The delegations from India and the European Union held delegations on a range of topics in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and EU President Ursula von der Leyen, and the leaders have directed their teams to conclude the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations by this year, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Friday. — **ANI**

CLIMATE LAWSUIT

A farmer in Peru takes on an energy giant in Germany

HAMM: In summer, Saul Luciano Lliuya grows corn, potatoes and quinoa. In winter, he takes tourists up to the icy heights of the Peruvian Andes.

Now the farmer from the mountain village of Huaraz is in the global spotlight. On the other side of the world, in the northwestern German city of Hamm, a trial between Lliuya and the German energy company RWE is taking place at the higher regional court.

“I’m a bit excited, but also worried,” Lliuya told DW. It is the third time that he has travelled from Peru to Germany for the climate lawsuit.

Nine years ago, with the help of non-governmental organisations, he sued the energy company, and made legal history.

He claimed climate change was threatening his house with flooding from an overflowing glacial lake above the village. Lliuya accused RWE, a major greenhouse gas polluter, of significantly increasing this danger through its climate-damaging emissions. He argued that the company should take responsibility and bear some of the costs for the protection of his house and village.

RWE rejects responsibility

During the hearing in the coming days, it will be decided whether Lliuya’s house is really in danger of being flooded and if so, to what extent RWE can be held responsible.

Lliuya’s first lawsuit against the company in a German court was rejected in 2015, but two years later the higher regional court granted an appeal.

“I feel a great responsibility,” says Lliuya. For him, the case is about fighting climate change and the melting of glaciers and “holding those who have caused the damage to account.”

“If there were such a claim under German law, every car driver



could also be held liable. We consider this to be legally inadmissible and the wrong approach from a socio-political point of view,” RWE said in a statement to DW.

The multinational, which is headquartered in the German city of Essen, points out that it has always complied with national legal regulations. The company is not active in Peru.

Flooding could affect thousands

Lliuya’s house and the Andean community of Huaraz are in a valley below a glacial lake which is steadily rising due to melting ice. An international study by scientists

from Switzerland and the USA, found the lake’s water levels have increased 34-fold between 1990 and 2010 alone.

According to the plaintiffs, higher temperatures and the melting of the permafrost also increase the risk of chunks of ice or rock falling from the rock face, which

is 2,000-meters (6,560 feet) high, into the lake. They say flooding caused by this could have dramatic consequences for Lliuya’s home and around 50,000 people in the local community.

In 1941, an avalanche caused a devastating flood in Huaraz that killed around 1,800 people.

Only recently, an avalanche of debris filled the lake to the brim, says Lliuya. A 2021 study published in the British journal Nature concluded that the melting glacier near Huaraz cannot be explained without climate change. The glacier ice has been continuously receding for more than 36 years.

How much responsibility should big polluters take?

This case is basically about the polluter pays principle, says lawyer Roda Verheyen, who is representing Lliuya. “There is someone who does something — it may be permitted, it may be prohibited — but it leads to really unbelievably large and unacceptable consequences,

in this case climate change.”

According to a 2014 study by Greenpeace and the environmental law non-profit Climate Justice Programme, RWE is responsible for a total of 0.47% of climate-damaging emissions since the beginning of industrialisation.

Lliuya is, therefore, calling for the company to contribute a corresponding share to the financing of protective measures.

These include drainage systems that allow meltwater to run off the glacier lagoon and an enlargement of the dam. Verheyen says Lliuya is not interested in receiving money himself, but wants RWE to pay a share of the costs of the protective measures.

Simulations from 2016 showed that a lower water level could significantly reduce the risk to the community, even in the event of significant rockfall or avalanches.

Although RWE recognises it is one of the largest CO2 emitters in Europe, it also says that it has always adhered to the legal limits for



emissions.

“In addition, since 2005, the plants have been subject to the European Emissions Trading Scheme, which was introduced at the time and under which we have to pay for every ton of CO2,” the company added in its statement. In 2023, the court had an expert opinion drawn up during an on-site inspection in Peru to check whether Lliuya’s house would be affected by heavy flooding.

Why is a climate case from Peru taking place in Germany?

For the lawsuit, the plaintiffs have made use of a neighborhood clause which can, for example, oblige highway operators to build noise protection because nearby residents are disturbed.

“We have a source of danger here that could potentially kill thousands of people, and we have no hazard prevention and no risk prevention, and that’s what it’s all about and what it is all about in the Andes,” Verheyen told DW.

In the RWE case, the court ruled in an earlier hearing that the transboundary effects of climate change lead to a kind of global neighbourhood relationship, even if the damage occurs thousands of kilometres away from the polluter.

RWE is just one of many polluters “but you have to start somewhere,” Verheyen said.

“If the court upholds the claim, this will send a clear signal to other major emitters,” said Petra Minnerop, professor of international law at Durham University, adding that though it is being heard in Germany, the case could set a serious international precedent.

The energy company RWE is of the opinion that it is not legally possible to attribute the effects of climate change to a single emitter.

Growing international climate lawsuits

Since the initial proceedings began in 2015, cross-border climate lawsuits have also been filed in other countries.

In the Netherlands, the oil and gas company Shell was in court until recently. Non-governmental organizations claimed the right to “protection from climate change” but were ultimately unsuccessful in their demands that the company rapidly halve its emissions.

In France, the fossil fuel giant TotalEnergies was sued in a case demanding it align business practices with the Paris Climate Agreement.

According to Minnerop, negotiating questions of responsibility for climate risks exclusively at a national level is not enough in the long term.

“Climate justice can only be achieved if we see it as a serious task within the framework of international law and pursue it with the priority that results from the scientific evidence,” she said.

If he loses, Lliuya fears that he and his village will end up without protection from flooding. He says that although the Peruvian authorities have plans for a dyke, there is no knowing whether it will be built, and that money from RWE and international attention for the construction could be helpful. — **DW**

Arab Parliament condemns renewal of Israel’s aggression on Gaza Strip

The Arab Parliament said this aggression and the continued targeting of civilians in the Gaza Strip, including children, women, and the elderly, and the demolition of homes, represent a clear disregard for the rules of international law

GAZA: The Arab Parliament Tuesday denounced in the strongest terms the renewal of the Israeli occupation’s military assaults and aerial attacks on the Gaza Strip, which claimed the lives of at least 404 Palestinian civilians, including children and women.

In a statement, the Arab Parliament affirmed that this aggression and the continued targeting of civilians in the Gaza Strip, including children, women, and the elderly, and the demolition of homes, represent a clear disregard for the rules of international law.

The Arab Parliament further



described this escalation as an official evasion of the obligations of consolidating the cessation of the war of genocide, a disruption of international efforts supporting a ceasefire, the reconstruction plan, and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Arab Parliament Speaker Mohammed Al-Yamahi said that the continuation of this escalation

would exacerbate the humanitarian catastrophe in the Gaza Strip, where more than two million Palestinians are living under bombardment, with a severe shortage of basic necessities.

“This is part of the occupation’s policy of starvation, preventing the entry of aid into the Strip, especially during the holy month of Ramadan, and destroying the

foundations of daily life in the Gaza Strip,” added Al-Yamahi.

He also slammed this escalation as it aims to eliminate the Palestinian presence as part of a systematic plan to destroy what remains of the Strip and impose a new reality consistent with its goals of displacing its population.

Al-Yamahi called on the international community, the Security Council, and influential countries to shoulder their responsibilities and put pressure on Israel, the occupying force, to halt the genocidal war committed against civilians and hold those responsible for these crimes accountable as war criminals,

He also called for providing protection for civilians and expedite the entry of humanitarian and medical aid into the Strip to reduce famine and the tragic conditions, urging for a firm international stance to ensure an immediate

cessation of the aggression.

UN Chief slams Israel’s resumption of military assaults in Gaza

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said on Tuesday that he was shocked over Israel’s resumption of aerial attacks and bombardment in the Gaza Strip after a two-month hiatus that so far claimed the lives of at least 400 Palestinian civilians, including children and women.

In a statement, Guterres said, “I was shocked by the resumption of Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which has killed and injured hundreds of Palestinians Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which has killed and injured hundreds of Palestinians.”

Guterres called for the respect for the ceasefire, the unhindered resumption of humanitarian assistance, and the release of the remaining hostages.”

Saudi Arabia condemns renewal of Israeli airstrikes

The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs Tuesday expressed the Kingdom’s condemnation and denunciation of the Israeli occupation forces’ resumption of aggression against the Gaza Strip.

The Ministry further slammed the direct bombardment of areas populated by unarmed civilians, violating international humanitarian law.

In a statement, the Kingdom stressed the importance of an immediate cessation of Israeli killing, violence, and destruction, and the protection of Palestinian civilians from the unjust Israeli war machine. — **WAPA**

Trump revokes secret service protection for Biden’s children

WASHINGTON, DC: US President Donald Trump has revoked the secret service protection for former US President Joe Biden’s children Hunter Biden and Ashley Biden. Trump noted that Hunter Biden had secret service protection for an extended period, which he said was paid by the American taxpayer.

In a post on his social media platform Truth Social, Trump mentioned that Hunter Biden is currently vacationing in South Africa, where according to him, the human rights of people have been “strenuously questioned.”

“Hunter Biden has had Secret Service protection for an extended period of time, all paid for by the United States Taxpayer. There are as many as 18 people on this Detail, which is ridiculous! He is currently vacationing in, of all places, South Africa, where the Human Rights of people has been strenuously questioned. Because of this, South Africa has been taken off our list of Countries receiving Economic and Financial Assistance. Please be advised that, effective immediately, Hunter Biden will no longer receive Secret Service protection. Likewise, Ashley Biden who has 13 agents will be taken off the list,” Trump posted on Truth Social.

Earlier in December, then-US President Joe Biden signed a pardon for his son, Robert Hunter Biden, who had been convicted on charges related to gun crimes and tax violations.

The pardon ensures that Hunter Biden will not face sentencing for these offences and removes the possibility of prison time. — **ANI**

Police fatally shoot suspect

HERNE: In Herne, a city in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, police officers shot a man dead after he reportedly attacked them with a knife.

German tabloid Bild reported that the man was 51 years old and had harassed his neighbor with a knife that morning. When the police arrived at the scene, he reportedly threw objects out his window at the police cars, breaking the glass.

Police said that after they entered the house to confront the man, he ran at them with a knife. The officers then shot him.

The man received medical attention at the site but they were not able to save his life. — **BW**

BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS

New Zealand PM highlights strong Kiwi-Indian ties

NEW DELHI: New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon on Monday highlighted the long-standing relationship between Indians and New Zealanders, emphasising over two centuries of shared history at the Raisina Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi.

He stated, “It is more than 200 years since Indians and New Zealanders began living side by side... Just as they were 200 years ago, ‘Kiwi-Indians’ today are fully integrated into our multicultural society.”

Luxon underscored the significant presence of the Indian diaspora in New Zealand, pointing out that “New Zealanders of Indian heritage comprise 11 per cent of the people living in Auckland, our

biggest city.”

He also brought a delegation of Kiwi-Indian leaders to Delhi, explaining, “I brought with me to New Delhi a selection of the Kiwi-Indian community leaders—members of parliament, captains of industry, professional cricketers, an online influencer who has revolutionised investment for women in the world. In short, a selection of Kiwi-Indians who get up every single morning to make New Zealand a better place to live.”

Prime Minister Narendra Modi warmly welcomed Luxon, calling it “a matter of immense joy to welcome him.” He described Luxon as “a youthful, dynamic and energetic leader,” and expressed his delight at having him as the Chief



Guest at the Raisina Dialogue.

In a post on X, PM Modi reiterated, “It is a matter of immense joy to be welcoming Prime Minister Christopher Luxon to Delhi.

It is equally gladdening that such a youthful, dynamic and energetic leader will be the Chief Guest at this year’s Raisina Dialogue.” He also mentioned their earlier discussions, stating, “We had wide-ranging talks earlier today, covering all important sectors relating to India-New Zealand friendship.”

Hyderabad House

Earlier in the day, the two leaders met at Hyderabad House for a bilateral discussion. MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal shared on X, “PM Narendra Modi warmly welcomed PM Christopher Luxon of New Zealand at Hyderabad House. Extensive discussions on bilateral relationships lie ahead.” Their talks covered a broad range of subjects, reflecting the growing

cooperation between the two nations.

In a joint press statement, PM Modi addressed security concerns, highlighting, “the devastating attacks on Christ Church in 2019 and Mumbai’s 26/11 tragedy.”

He stressed the importance of strong action against terrorism, affirming that such threats are unacceptable in any form. Both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to combating terrorism and violent extremism through bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.

Luxon arrived in New Delhi on Sunday for a five-day visit, including attending the Raisina Dialogue. He also paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat. — **ANI**

INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION

Stranded astronauts: How space affects the body

FLORIDA: Much was made of the potential health risks that stranded NASA astronauts Barry “Butch” Wilmore and Sunita “Sunni” Williams would face in space. Returning to Earth in March 2025, after an unexpected nine months at the International Space Station (ISS), their bodies will have adjusted to radiation and microgravity.

The effects of radiation and microgravity are the same for every astronaut — starting with nausea and bloated faces — but this mission was only meant to last a week. It begged the question: Would the effects be worse for Sunni and Butch?

Williams and Wilmore were stranded at the ISS in June 2024 their Boeing Starliner spacecraft experienced technical problems on the way there, and it was deemed too dangerous to send them back in the same vehicle

Both have experienced astronauts, having spent hundreds of days in space prior to their mission from 2024-2025

They will have been prepared and trained for a worst-case scenario, especially since the Starliner launch was a test mission

What it takes to be an astronaut

Humans haven’t evolved to live in space — that is, in an environment unprotected by Earth’s atmosphere, in near or zero-gravity — so those who travel to space need highly specialized training and careful health monitoring both before, during and afterward.



Astronauts selected for human spaceflight are considered capable of not only undertaking their assigned missions but also of managing complicated and changing situations.

Wilmore and Williams flew as test pilots for the first crewed flight of Boeing’s Starliner spacecraft to the ISS. But propulsion issues with their spacecraft meant their eight-day mission had to be extended. They joined a regular crew, known as SpaceX Crew 9.

Soon after they were stranded, retired German astronaut Thomas Reiter said he thought it would be “quite a burden” but that “they can handle it.”

Reiter served two missions in space, first on Mir, a Soviet-era

space station which de-orbited in 2001, and later as a flight engineer on the ISS. Williams replaced Reiter on her first spaceflight.

“Both of them are not inexperienced, they are familiar with the operations on board [the ISS],” said Reiter.

Radiation: One of the biggest risks of space travel

Space agencies devote entire departments to study the effects of space on the human body — the German Space Agency (DLR), for instance, runs its lab, envihab near Cologne.

In June 2024, the journal Nature published more than 40 studies described as the “largest-ever compendium of data for aerospace medicine and space biology.”

Among the studies was one known as TWINS. It involved 10 labs that compared astronaut Scott Kelly, who spent almost a year on the ISS in 2015, and his identical twin Mark, who is also an astronaut but had stayed on Earth. And it’s that study that points to one of the major risks of prolonged periods in space — radiation.

“It’s going to be space radiation exposure that’s going to be the big limiting factor for how well astronauts do or how long they’re going to be able to actually be in space,” said Susan Bailey, a radiation biologist from Colorado State University. Bailey led research in the TWINS study into the effect of radiation on telomeres, tiny genetic caps on the end of human chromosomes.

“Radiation exposure really is very damaging to our DNA,” said Bailey.

That exposure is what increases cancer risk for astronauts. It also raises oxidative stress within the body.

“That’s what all of that is about: Sparing them from those really hazardous late effects and some very acute effects,” Bailey said. “We have to come up with countermeasures, some way to protect the astronauts not only during spaceflight, but if they’re going to be camped out on the moon or even Mars.”

Space agencies have specific limits on the amount of radiation that astronauts can be exposed to throughout their careers.

Microgravity: From kidney stones to poor sight

Microgravity in space can cause bone demineralisation — astronauts lose around 1-1.5% bone density for every month spent in space.

This can also lead to changes in mineral levels in the body and result in health risks. For example, increased levels of calcium in the body’s excretory system, which removes waste such as urine, can lead to kidney stones.

“When they come back, they [can’t] go on the dance floor, like anyone else who’s been in weightlessness for many months,” Reiter said.

This environment can also cause changes to vision, with

fluids in the body shifting to the head and putting pressure on the eyes.

Prolonged pressure can lead to Spaceflight Associated Neuro-ocular Syndrome, which can change the eye’s ability to focus, sometimes permanently.

Upon their return to Earth, both Williams and Wilmore will be subject to regular health monitoring.

Plenty of food and water on the ISS

Despite the health risks associated with travelling to space, more immediate needs are well met by the ISS.

“If there are, all of a sudden, two persons more, they are not running short of water, oxygen or food immediately,” Reiter said.

Food, water, oxygen and carbon filtration needs are regularly serviced by resupply missions.

And there are six dorms, two bathrooms, and a gymnasium — so, plenty of room for the crew to spread out.

On top of this, psychological care will have been aided by integrating the long-stay astronauts into the ongoing projects at the ISS.

Wilmore and Williams immediately got involved in scientific and support work with the other astronauts.

“But astronauts want to be in space, they train their whole life [for it].” They may well have thought that being stranded in space was “pretty grand,” Bailey said. — **BW**

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Seifert and Allen shine in NZ win

Hosts beat Pakistan by five wickets in a rain-shortened game to take 2-0 lead in the T20I series

DUNEDIN: New Zealand delivered a dominant all-round performance to outclass Pakistan by five wickets in the second T20I in Dunedin, securing a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Tim Seifert's explosive 45 off 22 balls and Finn Allen's rapid 38 off 16 set the tone for an easy chase of Pakistan's 135 for 9 in the rain-shortened 15-over contest.

The hosts reached their target with 11 balls to spare, despite a late fightback from Haris Rauf.

Earlier, Jacob Duffy, Ben Sears, and Ish Sodhi starred with the ball, dismantling Pakistan's batting lineup before Salman Agha (46 off 28) and lower-order cameos from Shadab Khan and Shaheen Shah Afridi gave the visitors a fighting total.

After being put in to bat, Pakistan suffered an early jolt as Duffy's sharp bouncer had Hasan Nawaz mistiming a shot to backward point in the opening over. Sears soon dismissed the aggressive Mohammad Haris (11), who slashed to deep third, leaving Pakistan struggling at 19 for 2.

Agha, leading Pakistan in the absence of Babar Azam, played a counter attacking knock, but his side kept losing wickets at crucial moments. Sodhi's introduction in the middle overs proved decisive, as he removed Irfan Khan and Khushdil Shah in the same over to leave Pakistan in deeper trouble.

Agha's fluent innings ended

when Sears got him caught behind in the 10th over, after which New Zealand tightened the screws. However, Pakistan's lower order fought back, with Shadab (26 off 14) and Shaheen (22 off 14) adding vital runs to push their total to 135.

Duffy, Sears, and Sodhi all finished with two wickets apiece, while James Neesham, playing his first T20I in nine months, chipped in with two late scalps.

Despite a tidy maiden over from Shaheen, New Zealand's chase quickly gained momentum. Allen, returning to the scene of his record-breaking 16-sixes innings against Pakistan in January 2024, wasted no time in attacking. He launched three sixes off Mohammad Ali in the second over, setting the tone for a brutal assault.

Seifert then joined the party, smashing Afridi for four sixes in the third over, as New Zealand raced to 66 without loss in just 28 balls. Their onslaught featured seven sixes in the first three overs - the second-most in that phase in any recorded T20I.

Seifert's 22-ball 45 came to an end when he miscued a slower ball to mid-on in the fifth over. Allen, too, looked set for a bigger score before falling lbw to Jahandad Khan after a quickfire 38. But by

then, New Zealand was cruising at 88 for 2 in seven overs, needing just 48 more from as many balls.

Despite losing Mark Chapman and Neesham for single digits, New Zealand remained in control. Rauf provided a brief glimmer of hope for Pakistan, dismissing both Neesham and Daryl Mitchell in quick succession. However, Mitchell Hay's composed 16-ball 21 and Bracewell's winning boundary ensured the hosts sealed the victory comfortably.

'Bowlers did a good job'

New Zealand skipper Michael Bracewell praised his bowlers for adapting to the conditions.

"The guys bowling into the wind did a particularly good job," Bracewell said post-match. "When a wicket's been under covers, it offers bounce, and we used that well. We were pretty happy with the score at halftime."

With the five-match series now on the line, Pakistan head to Auckland needing a win to stay alive, while New Zealand eye a decisive series triumph.

Brief scores: Pakistan 135/9 in 15 overs (Agha 46; Sodhi 2-17, Duffy 2-20, Sears 2-23) lost to New Zealand 137/5 in 13.1 overs (Seifert 45, Allen 38, Rauf 2-20). - Agencies

OMAN CRUDE PRICE RISES

The price of Oman oil has increased, with prices for delivery by May 2025 reaching \$73.09, said Dubai Mercantile Exchange (DME). The DME statement said that the price of Oman oil rose by 81 cents from the price of Monday, which was \$72.28. - **ONA**

MARKET
BUSINESS & FINANCE



MSX INDEX ENDS LOWER

The MSX index closed at 4,362.04 points, down by 0.4% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.11% at 394.99 points. Shell Oman Marketing, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while Financial Corporation, down 8.33%, was the top loser.

Sezad completes first phase of plan to establish fisheries, food industries

The development of the master plan for the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex aims to encourage investment in the sector and ensure that service corridors do not overlap with roads, factories, and other facilities within the complex

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Special Economic Zone at Duqm (Sezad) has completed the first phase of the detailed master plan for the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex



as part of its efforts to encourage investment in the sector and localise a number of new projects. The complex spans an area of 750 hectares, equivalent to 7.5 square kilometres.

Eng. Ahmed bin Ali Akaak, CEO of Sezad, stated that the complex can accommodate 60 facilities. He added that the zone's administration has considered future expansion in the detailed design, should there be a need for further development. He added a statement in a press release to the Oman News Agency (ONA) that the recently completed first phase of the detailed master plan covers an area of 95 hectares. He added that the second phase will be completed



in the coming period. The development of the master plan for the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex aims to encourage investment in the sector and ensure that service corridors do not overlap with roads, factories, and other facilities within the complex.

The final master plan for the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex, covering both the first and second phases, includes numerous service and logistical buildings and facilities.

Among the key features are the cold chain complex, the red meat industries complex, the public utilities services complex, the central market, outlets for fresh product sales, residential-commercial

buildings, administrative offices, commercial buildings, and recreational service facilities.

The commercial and administrative services area will be located outside the complex's boundaries near the main entrance. This area will feature several buildings and services, including the administrative complex, retail stores, the grand mosque, a guesthouse, public service centres, a fuel station, a truck weighing station, and vehicle service centres. The main entrance to the complex will be designed to reflect the identity of the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.

Eng. Akaak added that consultants have been directed to study the optimal location for the com-

mercial and administrative services area, taking into account traffic studies and expected density related to access to the complex and the movement of heavy trucks.

Regarding the implementation phases of the detailed design project, he explained that the project has gone through several design stages. In the past period, various phases were completed, including data collection, site studies, market studies, and economic opportunity assessments. The initial master plan and conceptual planning ideas were also completed, along with the infrastructure network plan for the first phase of the complex's detailed master plan. In the coming period, work will proceed on developing the detailed master plan for the second phase and designing the architectural plans for service buildings.

The Fisheries and Food Industries Complex is located approximately three kilometres from the multipurpose fishing port, which plays a vital role in the operation and development of the complex. The site benefits from multiple access points, facilitating traffic movement as well as the import and export of products.

Eng. Akaak further stated that the site's design considerations include provisions for accommodating future expansions of the com-

plex. Initial studies recommend that future expansions be directed towards the southwest of the master plan.

He explained that the detailed master plan follows a grid-based design, ensuring flexibility to accommodate future changes, enhancing design efficiency, and optimising project costs. The plan focuses on creating a smart, carefully planned master layout that allows for easy movement and organisation into designated clusters. Additionally, integration and coordination between the existing plan and future designs for the second phase ensure a comprehensive and cohesive master plan.

Emphasising the economic importance of the complex, Eng. Akaak noted that the Fisheries and Food Industries Complex serves as a key economic driver in the region and has successfully attracted numerous projects in the fisheries sector over the past years. He highlighted that Sezad is actively promoting the complex's investment opportunities both locally and internationally in coordination with the Public Authority for Special Economic Zones and Free Zones (OPAZ). He affirmed that the development of the detailed master plan is a significant step towards attracting more investments to the Special Economic Zone at Duqm.

REPORT

GCC growth to withstand trade uncertainty

DUBAI: The GCC economy is expected to show resilience in the face of rising global protectionism and geopolitical tensions, according to the latest ICAEW Economic Insight report prepared by Oxford Economics. Despite the uncertain global outlook, the report forecasts Middle East GDP growth of 3.3% in 2025, with GCC economies set to grow by 4%, up from an estimated 1.8% in 2024.

While President Trump's tariff policies have created uncertainty over external demand, the GCC remains largely sheltered from direct tariff impacts. The region's non-energy sectors are projected to grow by 4.4% this year, up from an estimated 3.9% in 2024, with regional PMI data firmly in expansionary territory.

Following recent OPEC+ policy shifts, oil production will gradually increase from April, boosting oil-sector growth to 3.2% after two years of contraction. Saudi Arabia's, oil output is expected to reach 9.3 million barrels per day, driving oil sector growth of 1.9%, while the UAE's higher quota of 3.5 million barrels per day will support 4.8% growth.



Oil prices have fallen sharply in recent weeks due to tariff threats and increased OPEC+ supply, with prices forecast to average \$70.5 per barrel this year, down from \$80.5 in 2024.

Saudi Arabia and the UAE are expected to lead non-oil sector growth with 5.8% and 4.8% respectively. Tourism – the fastest-growing sector across the region in 2024 – will remain a vital engine for growth, with Saudi Arabia expecting continued expansion supported by the GCC-wide visa.

Qatar: GDP growth will gain

pace despite external headwinds

Qatar's GDP is forecast to expand by 2.1% this year, with growth expected to more than double in 2026 as additional LNG capacity comes online. The non-energy economy is projected to grow by 2.9% this year, remaining the primary growth engine. Tourism has provided significant support to Qatar's non-energy growth, with overnight arrivals reaching 5 million by end-2024, a 23% increase on 2023. The launch of the pan-GCC visa, is expected to push visitor numbers to 5.3 million in 2025.

The fiscal surplus is forecast at QAR27.3bn (3.3% of GDP) in 2025, significantly better than the deficit of QAR13.2bn pencilled into this year's budget.

Bahrain: The non-oil economy will continue to lead growth

Bahrain's economy is set to double its growth rate to 2.8% this year, with the non-oil economy expanding by 3.1%. The oil sector, after contracting by an estimated 2.4% in 2024, is expected to see a modest 0.9% recovery.

As part of its diversification efforts, Bahrain is establishing new industrial free zones and developing tourism infrastructure, including a \$427 million waterfront project. However, persistent budget deficits and a rising debt burden above 100% of GDP pose downside risks to growth.

Hanadi Khalife, Head of Middle East, ICAEW, said: "The business landscape across the GCC continues to demonstrate resilience and adaptability in the face of global economic uncertainty. We're seeing strong investment in key sectors like tourism and infrastructure, which are creating new opportunities for growth."

FINANCIAL SERVICE AUTHORITY

FSA warns Musandam Power for violating internal audit regulations and related party transaction

Times News Service

MUSCAT: The Financial Service Authority (FSA) issued administrative decision warning Musandam Power after the former board of directors which resigned in 2024 engaged unaccredited entities to perform certain internal audit works and the former board failed to ensure that related party transaction were entered into on fair and arm-length basis in violation of the applicable laws and regulations.

The decision states that the former board of directors had conducted detailed transactions with a related party (major shareholder in the company) in violation of Article 13.a of the Securities Law which states a "regulated entity must ensure that related party transactions are entered into on fair and arms-length basis and not to favour them through the terms of

such transactions."

The decision pointed out that the former board had enabled a major shareholder of the company to perform internal audit works, which is breach of Article 212 of the Commercial Companies Law, which provides "The company shall place the financial records at the disposal of the auditor to enable them to perform their duties in accordance with the law. The shareholders may access such records after submitting a request to that effect to the executive management."

However, the former board allowed the (major shareholder) to audit the financial records in violation of the law.

Hence, the FSA urges all regulated companies to strictly abide by the applicable laws and regulations and any breach of such laws would result in financial penalties or any other administrative penalties.

AMBITIOUS AGENDA

Dhofar Islamic charts ambitious growth path with landmark OMR250 million Sukuk programme

Times News Service

MUSCAT: Having firmly established itself in Oman's fast-growing Islamic banking and finance sector in 2024, Dhofar Islamic – the Islamic banking arm of BankDhofar – is gearing up for a milestone year in 2025. At the heart of its ambitious agenda is the launch of its first-ever Sukuk programmed, a substantial OMR 250 million issuance structured in multiple series.

According to Mohsin Shaik, Head of Investment Banking & Capital Markets at Dhofar Islamic, the Sukuk issuance will represent a defining moment in the bank's growth journey. "This initiative underscores our commitment to expanding Sharia-compliant financial solutions and strengthening our position as a leading player in Islamic finance. Over the past year, we have made significant strides in areas such as Sharia advisory, IPO management, wealth management, corporate banking,



retail banking, and SME financing. The Sukuk programme will further accelerate our momentum."

Reflecting on the past year, Mohsin acknowledged the challenges posed by global economic trends, particularly rising interest rates set by the US Federal

Reserve, which impacted banking profitability across both conventional and Islamic segments. "Despite these challenges, we delivered a strong performance in 2024, driven by solid results across our four key business units: Corporate Banking, Retail Banking, Treas-

ury, and Investment Banking. We continue to see robust demand for Islamic financial products, and our success last year has set the foundation for sustained growth in 2025."

A key highlight of Dhofar Islamic's 2024 achievements was its appointment as the Sharia Advisor for the OQBI IPO – marking its foray into IPO issuance management. By structuring the IPO in compliance with Sharia principles, Dhofar Islamic successfully attracted a significant number of investors. This experience has positioned the bank strongly for future IPO advisory roles.

Wealth management and investment solutions

Building on its expertise in wealth management, Dhofar Islamic aims to provide structured investment solutions for individuals looking to optimize returns. "Many clients currently hold their money in fixed deposits or Islamic CASA accounts, but we offer diversified

investment solutions tailored to their risk appetite," Mohsin said.

Dhofar Islamic provides access to Sukuk funds, equity funds, and balanced portfolios through partnerships with leading global Islamic asset managers. Additionally, it facilitates direct Sukuk purchases and custodial services, ensuring clients have a broad spectrum of Sharia-compliant investment opportunities.

While innovation remains central to Dhofar Islamic's strategy, Corporate and Retail Banking continue to form the core of its operations. The bank supports corporate clients in transitioning their commercial activities to Sharia-compliant models, with a specialized Corporate Banking team excelling across key sectors which is in line with Vision 2040.

On the retail front, Dhofar Islamic offers a growing suite of Sharia-compliant products, including home financing, Islamic credit cards, and savings accounts. "Awareness of Islamic banking is

increasing in Oman, and we see rising demand for Sharia-compliant financial solutions," Mohsin noted.

Strengthening engagement during Ramadan

With 25 dedicated branches across the Sultanate, Dhofar Islamic remains deeply connected with its customers. In line with its commitment to fostering strong community ties, the bank plans a series of special Iftar gatherings and events during Ramadan, reinforcing its core values of service, trust, and Sharia-compliant banking.

As Dhofar Islamic embarks on an ambitious 2025, its strategic focus on innovation, sustainable finance, and market expansion positions it at the forefront of Oman's Islamic banking sector. With the launch of its landmark Sukuk programme, the bank is poised to set new benchmarks in Sharia-compliant finance while supporting the broader national vision for economic diversification and growth.

MARKET

MSX index ends lower

Shell Oman Marketing, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Financial Corporation, down 8.33%, was the top loser



MUSCAT: The MSX index closed at 4,362.04 points, down by 0.4% from previous close. The Sharia Index ended up by 0.11% at 394.99 points. Shell Oman Marketing, up 10.00%, was the top gainer while, Financial Corporation, down 8.33%, was the top loser. Shares of OQEP were the most active in terms of number of shares traded as well as in terms of turnover.

A total number of 897 trades were executed during the day's trading session, generating turnover of RO 6.91 million, with more than 30.32 million shares changing hands. Out of 53 traded securities, 12 advanced, 23 declined, and 18 remained unchanged. At the session close, domestic investors were net buyers for RO 725K while foreign investors were net sellers for RO 649K, followed by GCC & Arab investors for RO 76K worth of shares.

Financial Index closed at 7,635.17 points, down 0.07%. Prices of United Finance, National Finance, Al Anwar Investment, Bank Nizwa were up by 4.84%, 1.54%, 1.47%, 1.01% respectively.

Prices of Financial Corporation, Oman & Emirates Investment, National Bank Oman, Sohar International Bank, Bank Muscat were down by 8.33%, 4.48%, 2.03%, 0.81%, 0.39% respectively. Industrial Index closed at 5,670.11 points, up 0.85%. Prices of Oman Cables Industry, Muscat Thread Mill, Voltamp Energy, Jazeera Steel Products were up by 6.72%, 4.00%, 3.18%, 2.74% respectively. Prices of Gulf Mushroom Products, Gulf International Chemicals, Al Anwar Ceramics, Oman Cement, Oman Flour Mills were down by 10.00%, 1.37%, 1.01%, 0.39%, 0.25% respectively.

Services Index was down by 1.17% before closing at 1,592.37 points. Prices of Shell Oman Marketing, Oman National Engineering, Oman Telecom were up by 10.00%, 1.67%, 0.86% respectively. Prices of Abraj Energy, Muscat Gases, Renaissance Services, SMN Power Holding, Sembcorp Salalah were down by 8.30%, 6.25%, 1.53%, 1.21%, 1.10% respectively. — United Securities

OMAN STOCKS

OMAN STOCK EXCHANGE

INDICES

Index	High	Low	Value	Prev. Value	Diff	Diff %
MSX 30 INDEX	4,379.65	4,364.95	4,362.04	4,379.47	-17.43	-0.40
FINANCIAL INDEX	7,667.98	7,634.58	7,635.17	7,640.61	-5.44	-0.07
Industry Index	5,694.45	5,615.29	5,670.11	5,622.43	47.67	0.85
Services Index	1,611.23	1,588.82	1,592.37	1,611.23	-18.86	-1.17
MSX Shariah Index	394.99	392.11	394.99	394.54	0.45	0.11
MSX TR INDEX	6,167.45	6,132.66	6,142.64	6,146.08	-3.44	-0.06
FINANCIAL TR IDX	8,711.62	8,673.67	8,674.34	8,680.51	-6.17	-0.07
INDUSTRIAL TR IDX	6,582.96	6,491.45	6,554.82	6,486.95	67.87	1.05
SERVICES TR IDX	1,960.13	1,932.87	1,937.18	1,942.92	-5.75	-0.30
FIXED INCOME INDEX	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	1,166.89	0.00	0.00

Trading Summary

Volume	30,322,401	Turnover	6,914,631	Trades	897	Market Cap	27,626,892,440	Up	12	Down	23	Equal	18	Sec. Traded	53
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SHARE PRICE BULLETIN FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 18

ISIN	SECURITY NAME	VOLUME	TURNOVER	TRADES	OPEN PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE PR.	PREV. CLOSE	DIFF	DIFF %	LAST PR.	LAST BID	LAST OFFER	PREV. VALUE	MARKET CAP
REGULAR MARKET																
OM0000002275	SHELL OMAN MARKETING	1,100	555	2	0.500	0.550	0.500	0.550	0.500	0.050	10.000	0.550	0.500	0.550	0.100	52,250.000
OM0000002374	UNITED FINANCE	1,250,244	80,034	28	0.062	0.065	0.062	0.065	0.062	0.003	4.839	0.065	0.065	0.066	0.100	23,148.274
OM0000002176	JAZEERA STEEL PRODUCTS	115,200	47,566	9	0.402	0.415	0.402	0.415	0.402	0.011	2.736	0.410	0.410	0.440	0.100	51,582.857
OM0000001152	OMAN NATIONAL ENGINEERING & INVESTMENT	17,474	2,141	8	0.124	0.124	0.122	0.122	0.120	0.002	1.667	0.122	0.121	0.124	0.100	18,300.000
OM0000003026	OMAN TELECOM	286,548	219,050	56	0.817	0.840	0.817	0.832	0.816	0.007	0.858	0.820	0.820	0.823	0.100	617,250.000
OM0000001533	OMINVEST	241,718	79,001	31	0.327	0.328	0.325	0.327	0.327	0.000	0.000	0.327	0.327	0.327	0.100	218,555.494
OM0000002440	AL SHARQIYA INVESTMENT HO.	7,917	594	3	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.074	0.075	0.100	6,750.000
OM0000003125	GLOBAL FINANCIAL INVESTMENT HO.	417,500	38,278	37	0.088	0.088	0.086	0.087	0.087	0.000	0.000	0.087	0.087	0.088	0.100	17,400.000
OM0000004768	MADINA TAKAFUL	108,233	8,998	11	0.084	0.084	0.083	0.083	0.083	0.000	0.000	0.083	0.083	0.084	0.100	14,525.000
OM0000004925	ALBATINAH POWER	208,000	14,003	8	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.067	0.000	0.000	0.067	0.063	0.067	0.100	45,217.458
OM0000004933	AL SUWADI POWER	205,502	13,187	12	0.064	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.065	0.000	0.000	0.065	0.064	0.065	0.100	46,438.412
OM0000007811	MUSANDAM POWER	100	27	1	0.266	0.266	0.266	0.266	0.266	0.000	0.000	0.266	0.241	0.266	0.100	18,723.740
OM0000002796	BANK MUSCAT	321,294	82,220	12	0.256	0.256	0.254	0.255	0.256	-0.001	-0.391	0.254	0.254	0.256	0.100	1,914,131.251
OM0000001749	OMAN CEMENT	158,906	80,503	29	0.508	0.510	0.504	0.505	0.507	-0.002	-0.394	0.506	0.505	0.506	0.100	167,090.719
OM0000003968	OCREDCO	34,500	6,189	4	0.180	0.180	0.179	0.179	0.180	-0.001	-0.556	0.179	0.171	0.185	0.100	116,510.017
OM0000009072	OQ GAS NETWORKS	2,410,979	312,193	89	0.130	0.130	0.129	0.129	0.130	-0.001	-0.769	0.129	0.129	0.129	0.100	558,650.486
OM0000003986	SOHAR INTERNATIONAL BANK	956,258	114,881	30	0.123	0.123	0.122	0.122	0.123	-0.001	-0.813	0.122	0.122	0.123	0.100	807,304.045
OM0000002168	AL ANWAR CERAMIC	84,634	8,311	13	0.099	0.099	0.095	0.098	0.099	-0.001	-1.010	0.098	0.097	0.098	0.100	21,560.000
OM0000004735	SEMBCORP SALALAH	82,300	7,437	6	0.091	0.091	0.090	0.090	0.091	-0.001	-1.099	0.090	0.087	0.090	0.100	85,911.476
OM0000003224	RENAISSANCE SERVICES	322,126	103,510	28	0.328	0.328	0.320	0.322	0.327	-0.005	-1.529	0.322	0.320	0.322	0.100	76,124.020
OM0000001483	NATIONAL BANK OMAN	1,530	441	2	0.294	0.294	0.290	0.290	0.296	-0.006	-2.027	0.290	0.290	0.294	0.100	471,524.443
OM0000001681	OMAN EMIRATES HO.	229,981	13,676	18	0.065	0.065	0.061	0.064	0.067	-0.005	-4.478	0.064	0.061	0.064	0.100	7,800.000
OM0000008934	ABRAJ ENERGY SERVICES	736,370	179,493	116	0.240	0.249	0.240	0.243	0.265	-0.022	-8.302	0.243	0.241	0.243	0.100	187,158.600
Total	23	8,152,384	1,410,285	533												
Parallel Market																
OM0000001077	OMAN CABLES INDUSTRY	700	1,624	1	2.320	2.320	2.320	2.320	2.174	0.146	6.716	2.320	2.320	2.391	0.100	208,104.000
OM0000002036	MUSCAT THREAD MILLS	1,200	147	4	0.121	0.130	0.121	0.130	0.125	0.005	4.000	0.130	0.121	0.130	0.100	2,291.076
OM0000003661	VOLTAMP ENERGY	12,922	8,325	12	0.630	0.682	0.630	0.650	0.630	0.020	3.175	0.650	0.650	0.670	0.100	52,911.788
OM0000002648	NATIONAL FINANCE	28,400	3,729	4	0.132	0.132	0.130	0.132	0.130	0.002	1.538	0.132	0.130	0.132	0.100	75,728.965
OM0000001772	ALANWAR INVESTMENT	332,074	22,932	20	0.069	0.070	0.069	0.069	0.068	0.001	1.471	0.069	0.069	0.069	0.100	19,807.839
OM0000004420	BANK NIZWA	392,670	38,894	9	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.100	0.099	0.001	1.010	0.100	0.100	0.101	0.100	223,685.303
OM0000001020	ASTAD SHIPPING	4,696,141	577,747	72	0.123	0.124	0.123	0.124	0.123	0.001	0.813	0.124	0.123	0.124	0.000	645,884.291
OM0000001160	NATIONAL GAS	40,000	3,000	2	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.000	0.000	0.075	0.075	0.076	0.100	6,375.000
OM0000001368	CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL INDUSTRIES	86	1,072	8	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.082	0.000	0.000	0.082	0.080	0.084	0.100	9,123.000
OM0000001590	MUSCAT FINANCE	60,148	2,767	3	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.000	0.000	0.046	0.046	0.049	0.100	14,128.731
OM0000001962	AL MADINA INVESTMENT HOLDING	9,628	424	2	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.000	0.000	0.044	0.044	0.048	0.100	3,740.000
OM0000002226	ALJAZEERA SERVICES	10,001	1,800	3	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.000	0.000	0.180	0.172	0.180	0.100	771,738
OM0000002812	SAHARA HOSPITALITY	542	1,516	1	2.800	2.800	2.800	2.800	2.800	0.000	0.000	2.800	0.000	0.000	1.000	22,185.240
OM0000005005	ALMAHA CERAMICS	4,900	603	3	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.123	0.000	0.000	0.123	0.123	0.130	0.100	6,765.000
OM0000005683	PHOENIX POWER	1,000	58	1	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.058	0.000	0.000	0.058	0.058	0.060	0.100	84,830.885
OM0000007084	MUSCAT CITY DESALINATION	36,017	1,717	4	0.064	0.064	0.063	0.064	0.064	0.000	0.000	0.064	0.063	0.064	0.100	9,953.226
OM0000001400	OMAN FLOUR MILLS	21,767	8,704	7	0.400	0.400	0.399	0.399	0.400	-0.001	-0.250	0.399	0.399	0.399	0.100	62,842.500
OM0000009759	OQ EXPLORATION AND PRODUCTION	13,827,547	4,437,203	77	0.320	0.321	0.318	0.318	0.320	-0.002	-0.625	0.318	0.318	0.320	0.002	544,000.000
OM0000009606	OQ BASE INDUSTRIES (SFZ)	1,726,330	177,345	68	0.103	0.103	0.102	0.102	0.103	-0.001	-0.971	0.102	0.100	0.102	0.040	352,868.067
OM0000004246	SMN POWER HOLDING	587,278	193,790	29	0.332	0.332	0.332	0.332	0.332	0.000	1.205	0.328	0.328	0.328	0.100	65,480.477
OM0000008447	OMAN REIT FUND	6,500	475	1	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.073	0.074	-0.001	-1.351	0.073	0.070	0.081	0.100	37,130.085
OM0000002028	GULF INTERNATIONAL CHEMICALS	115,946	8,240	9	0.071	0.073	0.071	0.072	0.073	-0.001	-1.370	0.072	0.071	0.072	0.100	1,512.000
OM0000009569	JABAL REIF	202	202	1	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.101	0.104	-0.003	-2.885	0.101	0.101	0.102	0.100	17,574.000
OM0000001178	MUSCAT GASES	4,000	300	3	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.080	-0.005	-6.250	0.075	0.075	0.088	0.100	2,250.000
OM0000002011	FINANCIAL CORPORATION	20,000	660	1	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.036	-0.003	-8.333	0.033	0.033	0.038	0.100	2,310.989
OM0000002287	GULF MUSHERO PRODUCTS	21,270	4,674	13	0.224	0.224	0.216	0.216	0.240	-0.024	-10.000	0.216	0.216	0.232	0.100	9,985.412
Total	26	21,950,949	6,496,967	350												



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CONNECT

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JOB WANTED

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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

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ENGINEER

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Diploma in Electrical Engineering looking for Fire Fighting site supervisor/suitable job. Contact: 959333453, Email: haquefaizan3786@gmail.com

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LIFESTYLE



Scientists discover hidden helium reservoirs in Earth’s core

This challenges traditional theories about the planet’s internal structure and provides new insights into the primordial nebula from which our solar system formed

A GROUNDBREAKING discovery by researchers from Japan and Taiwan has shown that helium, previously thought to be chemically inert, can bond with iron under extreme pressure. Using a laser-heated diamond anvil cell, the team observed this unexpected interaction, suggesting that large amounts of helium may exist in Earth’s core. This challenges traditional theories about the planet’s internal structure and provides new insights into the primordial nebula from which our solar system formed. Helium-3, a rare isotope of helium, is thought to be primordial and not produced on Earth. It’s found in volcanic rocks, particularly in Hawaii, hinting that deep within Earth’s mantle, pri-

ordial materials containing helium-3 may exist. To investigate further, the team applied pressures of 5-55 gigapascals and temperatures up to 3,000 kelvins, simulating the extreme conditions within Earth’s interior. They were surprised to find that iron compounds could hold up to 3.3% helium, much higher than previously seen. This discovery suggests that Earth’s core may have trapped some gas from the early solar nebula, which could offer new perspectives on the planet’s development and the origin of its water. The findings have the potential to reshape theories about Earth’s early history and the materials that make up its core. -DNA

SPORTS

MUSCLE INJURY

Messi ruled out of Argentina’s World Cup qualifiers against Uruguay, Brazil

BUENOS AIRES: Lionel Messi will miss Argentina’s upcoming World Cup qualifiers against Uruguay and Brazil after being left out of the squad due to injury.

The 37-year-old Inter Miami forward, who recently returned to action in Major League Soccer (MLS), suffered a low-grade adductor muscle injury during his club’s win over Atlanta United on Sunday.

Despite making a comeback last week with a goal in Miami’s

CONCACAF Champions Cup victory against Cavalier in Jamaica, the setback has forced him to step aside.

Messi took to Instagram to express his disappointment, calling it a “shame” to miss such “special” qualification matches.

“I wanted to be there as always, but at the last minute, a minor injury forced me to take a break before playing again,” he said. “I’ll be supporting and cheering from here like a fan.”



Argentina, the reigning World Cup champions, are on the brink of securing their spot at the 2026 tournament.

They currently lead the South American qualifying group with a five-point advantage over second-placed Uruguay and a seven-point gap over Brazil, who sit in fifth.

The Albiceleste will also be without Roma striker Paulo Dybala and River Plate full-back Gonzalo Montiel due to injuries.

Meanwhile, Brazil will be missing Messi’s former Barcelona teammate Neymar, who remains sidelined with a thigh injury.

With six games remaining, the top six teams in the South American qualifiers will earn direct entry to the World Cup, while the seventh-placed side will head to a play-off.

Messi remains the tournament’s top scorer with six goals, taking his international tally to 112 goals in 191 appearances. - Agencies

McIlroy claims title in a thriller

The Northern Irishman defeated JJ Spaun in a playoff at TPC Sawgrass for his second Players crown

FLORIDA: Rory McIlroy clinched his second Players Championship title with a victory over JJ Spaun in a three-hole playoff at TPC Sawgrass, Florida.

The Northern Irishman, now a 28-time PGA Tour winner, added another marquee triumph to his career in what is widely considered the most prestigious tournament outside the four majors.

“I’m unbelievably proud and happy to win my second Players,” said the world No.2. “It’s the third time I’ve won on St Patrick’s Day - it’s been a good-luck charm for me.”

The playoff unfolded in dramatic fashion, with McIlroy seizing control early. On the par-five 16th, he unleashed a booming drive



down the fairway, while Spaun found the rough.

The American, ranked 57th in the world, struggled to recover, taking three shots from a green-side bunker to make par.

In contrast, McIlroy reached the green in two and two-putted for birdie.

The decisive moment came at the iconic par-three 17th ‘island hole.’ McIlroy safely found the green, but Spaun’s tee shot splashed into the water, leading to

a triple-bogey six. With a three-shot cushion heading to the 18th, McIlroy navigated a wayward drive and closed out the victory with a tap-in bogey. Spaun, already four over, conceded the hole.

“I feel really bad for JJ,” McIlroy admitted. “He hit a great shot on 17, but it just went straight through the wind.”

Spaun, despite the disappointment, remained upbeat. “It looked like it was floating, and we didn’t see it land,” he said. “It’s hard not

to feel discouraged, but I’d have totally taken a playoff spot at the start of the week.”

McIlroy now sets his sights on the Masters in April, where he will once again attempt to complete golf’s career Grand Slam. Encouraged by his strong start to the season, he credited world No.1 Scottie Scheffler’s dominance as motivation.

“Scottie has been on an unbelievable run and inspired all of us to try to be better,” said McIlroy. “I

need to be better if I want to compete with him. It’s nice to tie him with this [second Players title], along with Tiger [Woods] and the five others who have won this multiple times.”

The victory almost slipped away on a storm-interrupted final day. McIlroy, who began the round four shots behind Spaun, had taken a one-shot lead through 11 holes before lightning halted play for four hours. When play resumed, he birdied the 12th to open a three-

shot advantage, only to bogey the 14th and miss further birdie chances.

Spaun, refusing to fold, birdied the 16th to force a playoff, nearly clinching the title with a 30-foot putt on 18 that stopped inches short. With daylight fading, the duel carried over to Monday, where McIlroy stamped his authority to reclaim the Players crown.

His latest triumph reaffirms his stature in golf’s elite - now, all eyes turn to Augusta. - Agencies

US NATIONAL TEAM COACH

Pochettino keeps door open for potential Spurs return

LONDON: Former Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino and head coach of the United States men’s national team, has reignited speculation about a potential return to the north London club, stating that he still holds a deep affection for Spurs and would like to manage them again in the future.

The 53-year-old Argentine, who led Tottenham from 2014 to 2019, was instrumental in shaping one of the club’s most exciting eras, guiding them to a second-place finish in the Premier League in 2016, the 2015 EFL Cup final, and the 2019 UEFA Champions League final. However, his tenure ended abruptly when he was sacked in November 2019.

“When I left the club, I always said in an interview that I would like to come back one day,” Pochettino told Sky Sports. “Even after five or six years, I still feel that in my heart. Yes, I would like to return one day.”



Despite his departure, Pochettino maintains a strong relationship with Spurs chairman Daniel Levy.

“After nearly six years together, with all the ups and downs, it was tough. But we separated on good terms,” he added. “Professionally, things change, but personally, we’ve always had a very good relationship.”

Following his exit from Tot-

tenham, Pochettino took charge of Paris Saint-Germain, where he won Ligue 1 and the Coupe de France, before moving to Chelsea for a brief spell. His one-season stint at Stamford Bridge saw Chelsea reach the EFL Cup final, the FA Cup semi-final, and finish sixth in the Premier League. However, he left by mutual consent last May.

“Sometimes, when things don’t work, it’s better to stop and look at different options,” Pochettino explained. “I think both sides were happy to part ways and explore new opportunities.”

Pochettino took on the challenge of leading the United States ahead of the 2026 World Cup, which the country is co-hosting. “Being the head coach of the England national team is a privilege, but timing is everything,” he said. “The opportunity with the USA was too good to turn down. Hosting the World Cup in 2026 is a massive project, and for a coaching staff like ours, it was an easy decision.” - Agencies

PREMIER LEAGUE

Arsenal to begin formal contract talks with Saka

LONDON: Arsenal are preparing to open formal negotiations with Bukayo Saka over a new contract, with the club eager to secure the long-term future of one of their most vital players.

Saka, 23, has been sidelined since December following a serious hamstring injury sustained in a victory over Crystal Palace.

The setback eventually required surgery, but despite his absence, the England international remains central to Mikel Arteta’s plans. With his current deal running until the summer of 2027, Arsenal want to avoid any uncertainty and are prioritizing a new agreement. Talks with Saka’s representatives are expected to intensify in the coming weeks, as the club looks to reaffirm their commitment to their hometown star.

Saka, who signed his last contract in 2022 - reportedly worth a minimum of £10 million per season - has long been regarded as one of Europe’s elite attacking



talents. Before putting pen to paper on that deal, he attracted interest from Manchester City, and with his reputation continuing to grow, there will be no shortage of suitors should contract negotiations stall.

However, Arsenal are optimistic about securing his future. Their status as Premier League title contenders under Arteta,

coupled with regular Champions League football, could be key factors in convincing Saka to extend his stay at the Emirates.

Saka isn’t the only key player nearing the latter stages of his contract. Midfielders Thomas Partey and Jorginho will see their deals expire this summer, while Leandro Trossard’s contract runs until 2026. - Agencies

IOC EXECUTIVE BOARD RECOMMENDATION

Boxing set to return to the Olympics for Los Angeles 2028

LAUSANNE: Boxing is poised for a return to the Olympic Games at Los Angeles 2028 after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) executive board on Monday recommended its inclusion in the upcoming Games.

The sport had been excluded from the initial programme announced in 2022, but the tide turned last month when World Boxing was granted provisional recognition as the sport’s international governing body.

The IOC’s recommendation is a crucial step, but it still requires approval during this week’s IOC session in Greece.

However, outgoing IOC president Thomas Bach expressed confidence that the decision will be ratified, ensuring that boxers worldwide will have the certainty of participating in LA 2028.

“After the provisional recognition of World Boxing in February, we



were in a position to take this decision,” Bach remarked on Monday.

Boxing’s future at the Olympics had been uncertain for several years. A significant hurdle was the creation of a new global governing body, as the International Boxing Association (IBA), previously re-

sponsible for the sport, was suspended in 2019 due to governance and ethical issues. The IBA’s controversial leadership, including a Russian-led administration, failed to enact necessary reforms, leading to its removal from the IOC’s recognised list in June 2023.



The IOC’s decision to manage boxing at the Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Olympics followed the IBA’s suspension, and tensions flared during the 2023 World Championships.

The IOC intervened when the IBA banned two boxers, Algeria’s

Imane Khelif and Taiwan’s Lin Yu-ting, over gender eligibility disputes.

The IOC allowed both athletes to compete, and they ultimately won gold medals.

World Boxing, founded in April 2023, now represents 84 members

across five continents, including Great Britain.

Last month, the IOC confirmed that World Boxing had met key criteria for provisional recognition, a milestone celebrated by its president, Boris van der Vorst. “This is a very significant decision for Olympic boxing and takes the sport one step closer to being restored to the Olympic programme,” he said, emphasizing the importance of boxing’s inclusion in the Olympic movement.

If boxing is reinstated for LA 2028, only athletes from national federations that were members of World Boxing at the start of the qualification period will be eligible.

Boxing has been part of every Olympic Games since its debut in 1904, except for 1912. The sport’s reinstatement would mark a major step toward its continued Olympic legacy. - Agencies

IN PICTURES



2025 Game Developers Conference kicks off in San Francisco, US
Attendees experience gaming device during the 2025 Game Developers Conference (GDC) in San Francisco, the United States. *Xinhua*



Holi Festival celebrated in Indonesia
People smeared with coloured powder celebrate the Holi Festival in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Holi, a carnival of colours, is a Hindu festival that celebrates spring, love, and new life. *Xinhua*



Seoul in South Korea witnesses spring snowfall
Tourists visit the Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul, South Korea. Seoul has witnessed a spring snowfall. *Xinhua*



Exhibition of orchids held at Prague Botanical Garden in Czech Republic
A boy looks at orchids on display at the Prague Botanical Garden in Prague, the Czech Republic. *Xinhua*



Highlight of Paris Fashion Week
A model presents a creation of the ready-to-wear Fall/Winter 2025-2026 collections by French fashion house Chanel during the Paris Fashion Week, in Paris, France. *Xinhua*



Rare Siamese crocodiles brought back to wild in Cambodia's Virachey National Park
A local official releases a juvenile Siamese crocodile into the wild in Virachey National Park in Cambodia. A conservationist group has released 10 juvenile Siamese crocodiles to the most remote area in Cambodia's Virachey National Park after over 20 years since the species disappeared from this habitat, said a joint press release. *Xinhua*

ROUND-UP

Chery’s exciting SUV range now with Ramadan campaign benefits

This exclusive campaign is valid until April 17

MUSCAT: Get hold of amazing driving experiences with the impressive Chery SUV range. Own any Chery SUV and get exclusive Ramadan campaign benefits. The benefits include a chance to win an all-new Chery Arrizo 5 (STD) sedan, up to 5 years/60,000 km service, 1-year comprehensive insurance, 1-year registration, assured fuel card gifts and an unparalleled 10-year/1,000,000 km



engine warranty. This exclusive campaign is valid until April 17, 2025. (Prospective buyers may be advised that the benefits vary between model variants, model year and manufacturing year. Terms &

Conditions apply. Customers can visit any Chery showroom for exact details.) The Tiggo 8 PRO MAX is a marvel of engineering and design that redefines the standards of modern

driving. Combining cutting-edge technology, luxurious comfort and exhilarating performance, the Tiggo 8 PRO MAX is tailored for those who love exciting moments on their journeys. The Tiggo 8 PRO

MAX boasts a 2.0L Turbocharged Engine paired with an advanced 7-speed Dual Clutch Transmission (DCT), delivering a seamless driving experience. With 254 horsepower and an impressive 390 Nm of torque, this SUV is built to conquer highways and rugged terrains alike. Its All-Wheel Drive (AWD) system ensures unparalleled stability and control, making every drive a thrilling adventure. Chery Tiggo 8 is starting from RO 10,300. Chery’s popular SUV, the Tiggo 7 Pro Max, continues to redefine the driving experience with its blend of luxury, technology, and performance. The Tiggo 7 Pro Max is available with two engine options. The 1.6-liter turbocharged engine delivers an impressive 197 HP, paired to a 7-speed DCT that ensures a smooth and dynamic ride.

The 1.5T engine has the maximum power of 154 HP, the maximum torque of 230N.m. This is paired to a 9-speed CVT. Chery Tiggo 7 is starting from RO 6600. The Chery Tiggo 4 Pro continues to redefine the driving experience with a blend of performance, advanced technology and modern aesthetics. The Chery Tiggo 4 Pro stands out with its dynamic and stylish exterior. The Tiggo 4 Pro boasts an efficient yet powerful engine, available in both 1.5L naturally aspirated and 1.5L turbocharged options, delivering the perfect balance between performance and fuel economy. Both are paired to a 9-speed automatic transmission. Chery Tiggo4 Pro is starting from RO 5700. In Oman, Chery vehicles are distributed by New World Autos.

AWARD



Bank Muscat recognised as Best Large Call Centre at Middle East Level

MUSCAT: Bank Muscat Contact Centre, has been recently awarded the prestigious “Best Large Call Centre” award at the INSIGHTS Middle East- Regional Call Centers Awards, one of the most respected recognitions in the customer service industry, highlighting the Bank’s unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional customer service and enhancing the customer experience at every touchpoint. The Bank’s Contact Centre is the largest center in the banking sector in the Sultanate of Oman. It provides various services around the clock and all days of the week to ensure various banking services and facilities are delivered to customers more quickly and efficiently. The INSIGHTS Middle East-Regional Call Centers Awards, are renowned for their rigorous evaluation process, which includes comprehensive assessments and benchmarks across a variety of customer service metrics. Recognized globally, the Awards are dedicated to acknowledging the best in customer service, celebrating establishments that exemplify quality, efficiency, and innovation in their customer support functions. The award recognizes organizations that demonstrate excellence in key areas, including customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, innovation in customer service processes, and employee engagement. Bank Muscat stood out for its commitment to personalized customer interactions, use of advanced technology, and consistent efforts to improve response times and resolution accuracy, all of which contribute to a seamless and rewarding experience for customers. “This prestigious award is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and customer-first approach that define our contact centre team,” said Talal Abdul Hameed al Zadjali, Deputy General Manager – Operations, Bank Muscat. “We continuously strive to innovate and enhance our service delivery, making sure that our customers receive the highest level of support and satisfaction. This recognition from INSIGHTS reinforces our commitment to excellence and motivates us to push the boundaries of what exceptional customer service can be. I would like to thank our Contact Centre Team for their dedication to apply the Bank’s vision and enhance customer experience” he added.

Bank Muscat is proud of this achievement and remains dedicated to advancing its customer service standards. Looking forward to the future, the Bank is committed to building on this success and continuing its journey of excellence in customer experience, leveraging new technologies and empowering its team to deliver unparalleled service for years to come. The Bank strives to attract qualified and talented Omani cadres to the centers and upgrade its technologies. It operates the center with over 170 team members who demonstrate competency in running the center to provide the best service to customers. Bank Muscat’s contact center offers a wide range of services, including money transfers, information about the bank’s products and services, inquiries about account opening procedures, credit card balance details and statements, loan information, fixed deposit interest rates, and currency exchange rates. Additionally, Bank Muscat customers can request card cancellations, account statements, cheque requests, credit card statements, utility bill payments (such as electricity and water bills), and many other services designed to complete customer transactions accurately and promptly. The Contact Center has implemented advanced cybersecurity measures and introduced the Bot-Based Outcalls Technology (BOT) which the Fraud Monitoring Team at the Center apply to detect fraudulent transactions and respond to fraudulent calls and suspicious communications. The implementation of this innovation has revolutionized and enhanced the communication methodology with the Bank’s customers. It has also helped the Bank’s services reach a wider customer base. The fraud monitoring team at the Center also address reports of lost cards or other urgent matters, enabling customers to block their cards if lost or stolen, either through the Center or via the Bank’s digital channels. Reaffirming its excellence in customer service, Bank Muscat has won the Customer Experience Innovation Award at the CX Live Awards Show Middle East 2024, named the Most Customer Centric Digital Bank by Global Business Outlook (GBO) Awards and Oman’s Domestic AI initiative of the year Award by the Asian Banking & Finance Awards.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Meethaq joins hand with Ministry of Endowments for Zakat campaign

MUSCAT: As part of its commitment to Islamic finance and social responsibility, Meethaq Islamic Banking from Bank Muscat, participates in the Zakat Campaign organised by the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs. In line with its strategic partnerships with the Ministry, Meethaq plays a vital role in facilitating the seamless collection of Zakat funds through Internet Banking, Mobile Banking, ATMs and CDMs, ensuring accessibility and convenience for customers and the general public. Those wishing to fulfil

their Zakat commitments can do so through the General Admin Account of Zakat (0611006600660016), ensuring it reaches those in need during the holy month of Ramadan. **Islamic Sharia** Ali Ahmed Al Lawati, Assistant General Manager, Meethaq - Corporate Banking, said: “Meethaq is keen to enhance Public-Private Partnership in various fields and sectors in the Sultanate to provide the best banking services and facilities which are compliant and in accordance with the principles

of Islamic Sharia. Meethaq plays a pivotal role in the campaign, ensuring the timely and efficient collection of Zakat funds to support the Ministry’s efforts in promoting social welfare. The holy month of Ramadan represents the pinnacle of this effort, witnessing a substantial increase in Zakat contributions; reaffirming our dedication to this noble cause.” Meethaq continues to expand its footprint in the Sultanate, supporting individuals, corporates and SMEs with innovative Sharia based financial solutions. With 32 branches across various governo-

rates, Meethaq stands as the leading Islamic financial services provider in Oman, providing financial expertise to all customer segments and reinforcing its role as the Sultanate’s premier Islamic financial services provider. Every Meethaq product goes through the process of Sharia-compliance certification by its Sharia Supervisory Board and is created in line with the guidelines of the Central Bank of Oman. Meethaq plans to continue expanding its services and products in response to customer needs and continuous feedback.

LANDMARK PROJECT

Oxy Oman celebrates opening of Green Walk Park

MUSCAT: Oxy Oman representatives recently celebrated the opening of the Green Walk Park, a landmark project that the company exclusively sponsored under the supervision of Muscat Municipality. The Green Walk park, located in Al Maabilah, spans an impressive 157,000 square meters and offers a wide array of recreational, sports, and interactive activities for the local community. Green Walk Park features a 3-kilometer path with separate lanes for walking and cycling, promoting active and healthy lifestyles. The park also includes safe play areas for children, multipurpose sports courts, a dedicated skateboarding zone, fitness areas, and cafés. Green Walk also boasts over 1,800 trees and 36,000 square meters of grass areas, and includes two underpasses that significantly



improve accessibility, along with a newly constructed side road running alongside the residential areas, ensuring seamless connections for all visitors and residents. The opening ceremony was held at the Green Walk park, under the auspices of Eng. Salim bin Nasser

Al Aufi, Minister of Energy and Minerals, and the attendance of Ahmed bin Mohammed Al Humaidi, Chairman of Muscat Municipality. Steven Lauver, President and General Manager of Oxy Oman, attended the opening event along with senior representatives

of the company. The opening event included a tour of the park, where attendees explored its various features and enjoyed a live roller blading performance, showcasing the diverse range of park activities for all ages. “We are extremely proud to celebrate the opening of Green Walk Park, a project that enhances the city’s green spaces and reflects our continued commitment to championing sustainability and well-being. This landmark initiative is in line with our ongoing efforts to create long-lasting, positive change in places where our company is located. Through our partnership with the Muscat Municipality and the Ministry of Energy and Minerals, we are excited to see Green Walk Park become a cornerstone of the community for years to come,” said Lauver.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL

Oxy Oman hosts annual General Manager’s HSE Forum 2025

MUSCAT: Oxy Oman recently held its annual General Manager’s HSE Forum in Muscat, bringing together colleagues and service providers to celebrate and reflect on Health, Safety, and Environmental (HSE) achievements in 2024 and discuss goals for 2025. Oxy Oman’s senior leadership congratulated the attendees for achieving the best HSE performance in the company’s four decades operating in the Sultanate, and detailed substantial investments towards improved welfare and wellbeing, including the creation of activity centers, recreational fields, and OPAL certification of all personnel camps in Oxy Oman concessions in 2024. The importance of Oxy Oman’s Zero-Harm value and culture – which prioritizes the safety and wellbeing of all employees and service providers – were a recurring theme throughout the forum and were included within the ongoing HSE Focus Areas for 2025, encouraging everyone to embody this value in every aspect of their work. The highlight of the event was the annual awards presentation,



which recognized the outstanding safety performance of excelling service providers. The company awards included categories such as Zero Harm, Zero Road Traffic Accidents, and Better Mousetrap (BMT) innovations. Companies were celebrated for their top-tier safety performance and contributions to a safer workplace. This year, Oxy Oman also unveiled a new award to recognize individuals for their exceptional contributions towards Zero Harm culture. Steven Lauver, President and General Manager of Oxy Oman, remarked, “The General Manag-

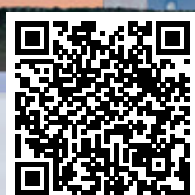
er’s HSE Forum is a testament to our unwavering commitment to health, safety and environmental excellence. It is through the collective efforts of our colleagues, partners, and service providers that we continue to strive for a remarkable safety performance and foster a culture of Zero Harm. We look forward to building on these successes in 2025 and beyond.” Oxy Oman is dedicated to fostering a safety culture that prioritizes safety, well-being, and innovation, and is committed to driving positive change for employees, stakeholders, and the environment.

SPORTS

Ramadan Tournament Tennis Ball Cup kicks off with 32 teams

MUSCAT: The Ramadan Tournament Tennis Ball Cup has officially commenced with an impressive lineup of 32 participating teams. This exciting sporting event is being managed by the Oman Tape Ball Club in collaboration with Pakistan School Muscat (PSM). The tournament brings together talent from across the region and is being conducted under the skilled management of Oman Tape Ball Club’s leadership team, including Zahid Shakoor Ch (Chairman OTC), Ahmad Raza Qadri (Vice Chairman OTC), and Mohsin Sheikh (Director OTC). “We’re thrilled to see such tremendous participation in this year’s tournament,” said Zahid Shakoor Ch. “The collaboration between Oman Tape Ball Club and Pakistan School Muscat represents our commitment to promoting sportsmanship and athletic excellence in our community.” The Tournament promises to deliver exciting matches.

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